

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper



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Diksha Singh, who plays Juhi in Swipe Crime, is winning over a audiences



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62 Crore devotees have come to Maha Kumbh, one of century's rarest events: UP CM

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Meloni slams Left's double standards, saying when Trump, Milei, Modi and I talk, it's called threat to democracy



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BRIEFLY

One held for theft at temple in Udhampur

JAMMU, Feb 23 (Agencies): One person was arrested Saturday for stealing several gold and silver ornaments from a temple in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. Unidentified thieves had struck the Durga Mata temple at Ramnagar and decamped with three gold and two silver items on Friday, a police spokesman said. He said Police have registered a case after receiving a complaint and started its investigation that led to the arrest of the culprit, Rohit Puri and the recovery of the stolen ornaments.

Light to Moderate Rain, Snow Expected from Feb 25-28: MET

SRINAGAR, Feb 23 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Meteorological Department has predicted dry weather on until 24 February, followed by light to moderate rain and snow at most places from February 25-28. Director MET Mukhtar Ahmad as per news agency JKNS said, the weather is likely to be generally dry on 23 and 24th February.

On 25-28th Feb, generally cloudy with Light to moderate Rain/Snow at most places with isolated heavy Rain/Snow over both Kashmir Division & Jammu Division during the above period, he said. Giving advisory Mukhtar said, there are chances of temporary disruption of Surface transportation mainly over Sadhna pass, Razdhan Pass, Sonamarg-Zojila-Gumri axis, Mughal Road, Sinthan pass & other major roads of hilly dists.

Tourists/travellers/Transporters are advised to plan accordingly & follow Admin/Traffic advisory. Farmers are advised to suspend irrigation & other farm operations, Mukhtar said.

Fire breaks out at Allochibagh Bund, Three-Story house engulfed

SRINAGAR, Feb 23 (Agencies): A massive fire broke out at Allochibagh Bund on Sunday, engulfing a three-story residential building. Officials confirmed

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J&K Legislative Assembly Speaker warns MLAs from giving publicity to House Business notices



JAMMU, Feb 23 (Agencies): With some MLAs giving publicity to notices submitted by them to the Legislative Assembly for the upcoming budget session, the Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather, has expressed displeasure over this

practice saying that this is against the parliamentary practices, conventions and established rules.

A communique issued here today in this regard by the Legislative Assembly, said the Speaker has observed

that, "According to parliamentary practice, usage and established convention and prevalent rules of this House, it is improper to give unwarranted publicity to the notices of Questions, Bills, Resolutions and other similar matters

connected with Business of the House".

He expressed displeasure over this stating that this tantamounts to breach of privilege as per the prescribed rules and directed the Members to desist from this, read the document.

A spokesperson of the Legislative Assembly was quoted by news agency KNO as saying that the Speaker has issued a directive to ensure strict compliance of the prescribed rules, exhorting the members to observe and honour parliamentary conventions and refrain from premature disclosure of the business to be carried out in the House.

Amid less snowfall, CM Omar expresses inability to announce new dates for Khelo India Winter Games 2025

SRINAGAR, Feb 23 (Agencies): Asserting that Gulmarg will soon become a premier destination for heli-skiing and adventure rides, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday said that the government is not in a position to announce new dates for Khelo India Winter Games.

Pertinently, the second leg of the Khelo Indian Winter Games 2025 that was scheduled to be held in Gulmarg earlier this month was postponed due to less snowfall.

Talking to the reporters on the sidelines of an inaugural function of a year-round helicop-



ter service in Gulmarg, Omar, said, "The administration is monitoring the snowfall situation.

Experts from the Ski Federation will assess the slopes in the coming days, and if they approve, the games could be held in the first week of March." He said, "As of now, we are not in a position to make any announcement. If we

receive adequate snowfall, the games will take place in early March; otherwise, it won't be feasible due to the approaching summer."

The Chief Minister said that the helicopter service will promote heli-skiing and also offer tourists a unique sightseeing experience. "Soon, Gulmarg will be recognized as a premier destination for heli adventures alongside the famous Gondola rides".

"The helicopter service will operate throughout the year, allowing visitors to enjoy scenic aerial views," he added.

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DIG CKR and DIG CRPF Ops review joint operational preparedness in Ganderbal

SRINAGAR, Feb 23 (Agencies): In a significant move to enhance security and operational synergy, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Central Kashmir, Rajiv Pandey-IPS* and DIG CRPF Ops North Range Srinagar Sudhir Kumar reviewed the joint operational competence of SOG Ganderbal and CRPF.

SSP Ganderbal Ragav S, IPS and other senior officers of Police and CRPF were also present on the said occasion.

The Jawans of SOG Ganderbal and CRPF had undergone rigorous training and simulations to enhance their opera-



tional abilities and synergy and their overall competence was reviewed during this visit.

Firstly, SSP Ganderbal, Ragav S-IPS provided a

detailed presentation on the present security scenario of the district along with the joint operations that have been undertaken by JKP and CRPF. Further, DIG CKR Rajiv Pandey-IPS, while briefing the joint team of JKP and CRPF, provided a detailed account of the recent security developments in J&K and underscored the importance of effective strategies to tackle them and guided the

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First Novel reflects inner life of Author: Karan Singh

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): The protagonist of "The Temple of Shiva" is "sort of an alter ego", says veteran Congress leader Karan Singh, noting that an author's first novel reflected their inner life.

Singh made the remarks while talking about his book "The Temple of Shiva" at an event.

As he engaged in a conversation with a journalist, the event offered profound insights into literature, philosophy and



storytelling.

Published by Parchment Publications, "The Temple of Shiva" intricately blends history, mythology and devotion, creating a rich narrative around faith and self-

discovery, according to a statement.

During the discussion, Singh shared a fascinating insight into his protagonist, Ashok, describing him as an alter ego — what he might have been had he not been born into his current circumstances.

"Your first novel," he said, "always reflects the inner life of the author." Parchment Publications hosted the discussion at Kunzum Bookstore.

Shubhi Arya, the

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Mehbooba slams Assembly Speaker, Accuses him of imposing a form of 'Martial Law'

SRINAGAR, Feb 23 (Agencies): PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Sunday said the role of the assembly speaker is to safeguard the rights of members of the legislature and not to act as a censor.

Her remarks came after Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather took a serious note of publicity of the House business notices ahead of the Budget session.

The Speaker has asked the members to desist from the breach of privilege.

The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister accused Rather of imposing a form of "martial law" while occupying a constitutional position.

"While Rathar Sahab may be concerned with preserving the sanctity of legislative proceedings, as Speaker, his primary role is to safeguard the rights of members,

not to act as a censor," she said in a post on X. She said transparency and public awareness of legislative activities should not be seen as an infringement on parliamentary practices.

"On the contrary, informing the public about notices, questions, and resolutions in advance promotes accountability. Many significant parliamentary bills, such as the recent Waqf Bill, are debated

publicly for months.

"Regrettably, it appears that Rathar Sahab, a seasoned politician, is imposing a form of martial law while occupying a constitutional position," she added.

The Budget session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly is scheduled to begin on March 3.

The Speaker said it is improper to give unwarranted publicity to the notices of questions.

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Several members of J&K handicapped association detained after their protest march against Govt

SRINAGAR, Feb 23 (Agencies): Police on Sunday detained several members of Jammu and Kashmir Handicapped Association (JKHA) after they took out a protest march here against the government's "failure" to improve the lives of the disabled, officials said.

Dozens of members of the JKHA assembled near the Press Enclave here holding banners and raising slogans, and called for an immediate government action for the welfare of the



disabled community in Jammu and Kashmir, the officials said.

The protesters alleged successive governments have failed to improve the lives of the

community. They demanded launching of a special recruitment drive for qualified disabled persons, and enhancement in the monthly pension

from Rs 1000 to Rs 5000.


They also demanded low-interest loans covered in subsidy and vertical reservation in jobs.

The demands also included four per cent reservation in MGNREGA work as well as in assemblies, municipalities, and panchayats.

The protesters also demanded setting up of an advisory board for their socio-economic development, and opening of separate counters

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UTHALA



Er. K.K. Pandoh
(Retd. Chief Engineer, PDD)

With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the sad demise of
Sh. Kuldip Kumar Pandoh, Retd. Chief Engineer (PDD), J&K Govt.
S/o Late Sh. Lala Dina Nath Pandoh R/o 3-Aikta Ashram, New Rehari,
Jammu on 21-02-2025.

UTHALA will take place on **Monday, 24-02-2025 from 4 pm to 5 pm** at
Gurudwara Fateh Singh, adjoining KV School, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN

<p>Deeply Remembered by: Smt. Santosh Pandoh (Wife) Sister in Law & Brother Smt. Vijay Pandoh W/o Late Sh. P. K Pandoh Brother in Law & Sister Sh. Bodh Raj Verma & Late Smt. Rama Verma Daughter in Law & Son Bhawna & Yogesh Pandoh Deepika & Kartavya Bharti Pandoh (Mithu) Daughter & Son in Law Monika & Er. Rajesh Gandotra Dr. Sonika & Dr. Atul Khullar Dr. Bhawna & Er. Samir Sharma Shivani & Atin Gupta</p>	<p>Grand Daughter & Grand Son in Law Naina & Aditya Mahajan Atisha & Paras Gupta Grand Daughter in Law & Grand Son Muskan & Satyam Gandotra Grand Children Vanshika, Anadika, Shivaansh Anchit, Ishita, Pragun, Pranat, Krishiv, Anvi</p>
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Yudhvir Sethi inaugurates J&K's 1st Sports Festival 2025 "Arm of Steel 3.0"

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: In a momentous step towards promoting fitness and wellness, BJP leader and MLA Jammu East Constituency, Yudhvir Sethi, today inaugurated Jammu & Kashmir's first Sports Festival 2025 "Arm of Steel 3.0". The event witnessed an enthusiastic participation of over 200 athletes from various districts of the region.

The sports festival featured six exciting disciplines: Powerlifting, Aesthetic Physique, Arm Wrestling, Yoga, Calisthenics, and Strict Curl. Each event was a showcase of raw strength, determination, and passion, reflecting the growing fitness culture in the region.

This pioneering initiative was conceptualized and organized by Sahil Anand, the founder of Gymkhana. Sahil's



vision is not only to provide athletes with a platform to showcase their skills but also to promote the message of a drug-free India. The festival is part of a broader campaign to inspire the youth to embrace fitness and lead healthier, more active lives.

The inauguration ceremony saw a strong show of support from prominent figures, including Mandal President Swati Sharma, Ex-Corporator

Suneet Raina, Adv. Nidhi Magotra, Raman Sharma, Karan Sharma, and a large gathering of local supporters.

Addressing the enthusiastic gathering, MLA Yudhvir Sethi emphasized the importance of fitness, not only for building physical strength but also for fostering mental resilience. He remarked that a healthy mind and body are key to overcoming challenges in life, and sports play an

essential role in shaping the future of the youth.

Sethi lauded the tireless efforts of Sahil Anand and his dedicated team in bringing the Arm of Steel 3.0 Sports Festival to Jammu & Kashmir, acknowledging that this event provides a unique platform for athletes to showcase their talents. He reaffirmed the BJP's commitment to empowering the youth of the region through

such initiatives, which inspire them to pursue their passion for fitness and contribute positively to society.

Sethi also shared his excitement over the event, praising the efforts to inspire young people to adopt fitness as part of their lifestyle.

The MLA further highlighted the significant role that sports can play in addressing pressing societal issues, such as drug abuse, and urged the youth to channel their energy into positive activities like sports to build a brighter future for themselves and the community.

Sahil Anand said "Arm of Steel 3.0" is not just a sports competition; it's a movement aimed at motivating the new generation to prioritize health, fitness, and well-being, marking a significant step in Jammu and Kashmir's journey towards a healthier future.

Jammu University unites for Rare Disease Awareness with Racefor7



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: The University of Jammu came together to advocate for rare disease awareness by hosting the "Race for Rare," a 7-kilometer marathon and walkathon under the national Racefor7 campaign by the Organization for Rare Diseases in India (ORDI).

The event saw the enthusiastic participation of over 150 students, faculty members, medical professionals, and advocates, all committed to raising awareness about the 70 million people in India living with rare diseases.

Organized by the Science Club (Utsaah) in collaboration with the Institute of Human Genetics, Department of Zoology, Department of Pediatrics (SMGS Hospital, GMC Jammu), Department of Journalism and Media Studies, and the Mission Program on Pediatric Rare Genetic Disorders, the event also marked the 10th anniversary of Racefor7. The 7-kilometer run/walk symbolized both the 7,000 known rare diseases and the 7-year average delay in receiving a diagnosis.

Prof. Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research Studies, University of Jammu, inaugurated the event, calling it "a beacon of hope for underserved communities in Jammu." She emphasized the importance of educating society about rare diseases that often run

in families. Prof. Prakash C. Antahal, Chairperson of Student Welfare, underscored the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration in raising awareness and extending the campaign to remote areas.

Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Registrar, commended the initiative, highlighting that rare diseases often receive little attention in public health. He noted that such events play a vital role in raising awareness, uniting communities, and pushing for policies that ensure accessible healthcare and early diagnosis for those in need.

Prof. Garima Gupta, Head, DJMS emphasized how such events unite the people for a vital health cause.

Several medical experts, including Dr. Sanjeev Digra (Department of Pediatrics, SMGS Hospital), Dr. Parvinder Kumar (Institute of Human Genetics & Department of Zoology), and Dr. Ravindar K. Gupta (HOD, Pediatrics, ASCOMS), spoke about the latest advancements in genetic research, diagnosis, and treatment options for rare diseases.

Other distinguished attendees included Dr. Vikram Sahi (Library Sciences), Dr. Amit Gupta (Zoology), Dr. Shashpal (Zoology), and Dr. Rajesh Sharma (Buddhist Studies).

The event was not just about the marathon—it

was a celebration of resilience and community spirit. Participants warmed up with a Zumba session, and after crossing the finish line, a flash mob kept the energy high. Every participant received T-shirts, medals, and e-certificates as a token of appreciation for their commitment to the cause.

Student coordinators and scholars, including Dr. Mohd Younis (Organizing Secretary), Nikita Mahajan, Prajwala, Harsha, Gagandeep Kour, Manvi, Priya, Rashmi, Pakshita, Sahil, Nalin, Narinder, Sakshi Sawhney, and Er. Shubham Kotwal (Media Coordinators), played a crucial role in making the event a success.

Rare diseases affect over 70 million Indians, yet only 450 conditions are officially recognized. Shockingly, 30% of affected children do not survive beyond age 5, and treatments exist for less than 5% of rare diseases, often costing lakhs annually.

The event called upon policymakers to prioritize affordable treatments, neonatal screening, and inclusive healthcare policies. Dr. Chinmoyee Maharana, Science Club Coordinator and Assistant Professor in the Department of Zoology, emphasized that "awareness is the first step toward justice for rare disease patients." She also shared plans to expand the campaign across Jammu to support affected families.

Safai Karamcharis deserve dignity, job security, welfare measures: Randhawa



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: Senior BJP leader and MLA Bahu Constituency, Vikram Randhawa today met with a delegation of the Akhil Bharatiya Safai Mazdoor Sangh, led by its State General Secretary Amar Mooman and listened to the long-pending grievances of Safai Karamcharis in Jammu and Kashmir.

The delegation submitted a memoran

dum detailing the key issues faced by sanitation workers and urged immediate intervention for their resolution.

During the meeting, Amar Mooman apprised the MLA of the challenges faced by Safai Karamcharis, particularly the demand for the regularization of Urban Local Bodies (ULB) employees who have completed seven years of service. He expressed concern over

the increasing trend of outsourcing sanitation services, which has led to job insecurity and exploitation of contractual workers. He urged the administration to halt such outsourcing practices and instead provide stable employment to these essential workers.

The delegation also highlighted serious concerns regarding the non-deposit of Employees' Provident Fund

(EPF) and Employees' State Insurance (ESI) by contractors despite regular deductions from workers' salaries. They demanded stringent action against defaulters to ensure workers receive their rightful benefits. Another major demand raised was the implementation of the old pension scheme for all Safai Karamcharis in J&K, ensuring financial security post-retirement. The delegation insisted on the execution of the "Same Work, Same Pay" policy for all workers, including daily wagers and contractual employees, as per Supreme Court guidelines and DPC of all Cadres. Additionally, the delegation pressed for the immediate clearance of pending cases under SRO 43 and the disbursement of pending salary arrears of JMC and SMC sanitation workers from 2005, 2008, and 2010.

Vikram Randhawa appreciated the invaluable role of sanitation workers in maintaining public health and hygiene, acknowledging their relentless efforts despite challenging working conditions. He emphasized that Safai Karamcharis are the backbone of urban cleanliness and deserve dignity, job security, and proper welfare measures.

The senior BJP leader assured the delegation that their genuine demands, including regularization, financial security, and fair wages, would be strongly advocated at the highest levels. He reiterated BJP's commitment to ensuring better working conditions for sanitation workers and stressed the need for administrative reforms to address their long-pending grievances, recognizing their contributions as essential to society's well-being.

Army conducts awareness lecture on Drug Abuse at Sial Sui Batsiyala

Top News Report

POONCH, Feb 23: The Indian Army conducted an insightful lecture on the critical issue of drug abuse, aimed at educating the public, especially youth, about its detrimental effects at Sial Sul and Batsiyala.

The event was conducted as part of the Indian Army's community outreach initiative to promote a healthy and disciplined lifestyle while raising awareness about the physical, psychological, and social harm caused by substance abuse.

The session began with an overview of drug abuse, highlighting the types of commonly abused substances such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and synthetic drugs.

The students were explained the mechanisms by which these substances affect the brain and body, leading to addiction and long-term health complications.

The lecture underscored the severe consequences of drug addiction, including mental health issues like



depression and anxiety, physical ailments such as liver damage and respiratory problems and the breakdown of personal relationships.

The event also discussed the ripple effect of drug abuse on society, including increased crime rates and economic losses.

Special attention was given to the factors contributing to drug abuse, such as peer pressure, stress, lack of awareness, and easy availability of substances. The Indian Army highlighted the importance of addressing these root causes to curb the prob-

lem. The lecture emphasized the significance of early intervention and preventive strategies, including Educating individuals about the dangers of drug use through schools, colleges, and community programs. The role of strict enforcement of anti-drug laws and regulations in reducing substance availability and the role of locals in helping the security forces to help catch the individuals involved in these activities.

The Indian Army also highlighted the importance of rehabilitation

for those battling addiction.

The lecture provided information on available support systems, helplines, and rehabilitation centers that assist individuals in overcoming addiction and reintegrating into society.

The lecture concluded with a motivational message for the youth to stay away from drugs and contribute positively to society. The Indian Army urged the community to actively participate in creating a drug-free environment by reporting illegal activities and supporting awareness campaigns.

email: macjammu21@gmail.com

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE MARKET ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE
FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKET NARWAL, JAMMU.

DDHI/E-TENDER/2024-25/66-70
DATE:-18.02.2025

E- Tender Notice for Outsourcing of Canteen situated in Phase-II, Fruit Market Narwal, Jammu.

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor, Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory and Department of Horticulture (P&M) / Market Administration Committee, Fruit & Vegetable Market Narwal Jammu invites e-Tenders from interested parties viz. reputed Hoteliers / Caterers / Fruit & Vegetable Associations / Interested persons with minimum one year of experiences and registered with FSSAI under Food Safety & Standards Authority of India under FSSAI Act, 2006 for outsourcing of Canteen in Fruit Market Narwal Jammu for the period of **12 (Twelve) months; starting from 01.04.2025 to 31.03.2026.**

Name of work	Minimum Reserve Bid	Cost of Tender document	Period of contract	CDR Amount	Remarks
01	02	03	04	05	06
Outsourcing of Canteens located at Fruit Market, phase-2 nd Narwal Mandi, Jammu.	Rs.2,00,000 + GST as applicable in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir	Rs. 1000/- (Non-Refundable)	01.04.2025 TO 31.03.2026	Rs. 4000/-	Further extendable for a period of one year with 10% increase on all the components and on the same T&C subject to the goodwill / satisfactory work and conduct of the Contractor which is to be certified by MARKET ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE Narwal Jammu.

- The bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://jrtenders.gov.in> from 10:00 hrs on **19.02.2025 to 11.03.2025 up-to 1800 hrs**
- The bid shall be deposited in the Electronic format on the website <http://jrtenders.gov.in>.
- Technical bids of the bidders shall be opened online in the office of Deputy Director Jammu / Head MARKET ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE on **12.03.2025 at 1200 hrs**. If the Office happens to be closed on date of opening as specified, the same shall be opened on the next working day at same time and venue in the presence of the committee members constituted by the Worthy Director Horticulture (P&M) J&K.

Sd/-
Member Secretary,
Market Administrative Committee
FRUIT & VEGETABLE Market Narwal Jammu

DIP/J-10442/24

EDITORIAL

CYBERSECURITY
CHALLENGES

The digital age has brought unprecedented convenience, connectivity, and innovation. However, with the rapid expansion of digital infrastructure, cybersecurity threats have escalated, posing significant risks to individuals, businesses, and governments worldwide. Cybersecurity, the practice of protecting systems, networks, and data from cyber threats, has become a global priority. Despite technological advancements, the challenges in securing digital assets continue to evolve.

Cyber threats have become more sophisticated and frequent. With increased internet penetration, the attack surface for cybercriminals has expanded. Cybercriminals trick individuals into providing sensitive information through deceptive emails or messages. Phishing remains one of the most common and effective cyber threats. Malicious software encrypts users' data, demanding a ransom for its release. Ransomware attacks have crippled businesses, hospitals, and even government agencies worldwide. Unauthorized access to sensitive data leads to financial losses and reputational damage. High-profile data breaches have exposed millions of personal records in recent years. With billions of connected devices, IoT security has become a major concern. Poorly secured IoT devices can be exploited to launch large-scale cyber-attacks. While AI helps in cybersecurity, it also enables cybercriminals to launch more sophisticated and automated attacks. As businesses shift to cloud computing, cloud security vulnerabilities have emerged, including data leaks, misconfigurations, and unauthorized access.

Despite awareness of cybersecurity threats, several challenges hinder robust security measures. Many individuals and businesses fail to recognize the importance of cybersecurity until they fall victim to cyber-attacks. The demand for skilled cybersecurity experts far exceeds supply, leaving many organizations vulnerable. Cybercriminals continually adapt to security measures, making it challenging to stay ahead of new threats. Cybersecurity laws and policies vary across countries, leading to inconsistencies in enforcement and compliance. Employees with access to critical data can pose security risks, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Many organizations rely on third-party vendors who may not have strong cybersecurity measures, creating potential vulnerabilities.

To combat cyber threats, governments, businesses, and individuals must adopt proactive cybersecurity measures. Multi-factor authentication (MFA) and biometric security can enhance access controls and reduce unauthorized access; Keeping software and systems updated helps close security loopholes and prevent exploitation; Organizations must train employees on best cybersecurity practices, including identifying phishing attempts and securing sensitive data; AI and machine learning can be used to detect and respond to cyber threats in real-time, strengthening defense mechanisms; Organizations should implement robust cloud security policies, including encryption and access controls; Governments should establish comprehensive cybersecurity laws and collaborate internationally to combat cybercrime effectively; Organizations should conduct regular security audits and employ ethical hackers to identify vulnerabilities before cybercriminals exploit them.

As technology continues to advance, cybersecurity must evolve to keep pace with emerging threats. Innovations such as quantum computing, blockchain technology, and AI-driven security solutions hold promise for enhancing cybersecurity defenses. Additionally, global cooperation is crucial in addressing cross-border cyber threats. Governments, businesses, and individuals must work together to create a secure digital environment.

In conclusion, cybersecurity is no longer an option but a necessity in today's digital world. As cyber threats grow in complexity, proactive measures, investment in cybersecurity infrastructure, and continuous adaptation to new challenges are essential. By fostering a culture of cybersecurity awareness and collaboration, we can mitigate risks and ensure a safer digital future for all.

International Mother Tongue Day & Maintaining Linguistic Diversity

By: Omkar Dattatray

International Mother Language Day has been observed/celebrated worldwide including in India and JK UT on 21st February 2025 with dedication and fervor. The Day is annually observed throughout the globe on 21st February. It is observed to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism. It is necessary to promote and preserve linguistic diversity and love, respect all languages. Mother Language Day is part of a larger campaign "to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by people around the world." as adopted by the UNGA on May 16, 2007, in a UN resolution that also declared 2008 the International year of languages. On this occasion world commemorates the deaths of four student activists from Bangladesh. Languages are the main medium of communication in the society and there are more than 8000 languages in the globe and all the languages are bridges of communication and have a pivotal place in the society and there should be no language antagonism and language chauvinism and one language enriches the other and so each and every language is essential bridge of communication, information and meaning. All languages need to be promoted, preserved and protected for the good of human society. The use of language cannot be dispensed with at any cost. Languages are essential to education and sustainable development, serving as the primary means through which knowledge is transferred and cultures are preserved. With approximately 8,324 languages in the world today, many are at risk of disappearing due to globalization and societal changes. Education can better be ensured through the medium of mother tongue and so the education should be given primarily through mother language as this ensures better

comprehension and understanding among children. Even in higher classes, education can best be given through mother tongue as this leads to better education and increases understanding quickly and easily. For improving learning outcome, it is advisable to impart education in local language. In fact students who are taught in a language they fully understand show better comprehension, engagement, and critical thinking skills. Multilingual education, particularly for minority and indigenous languages, not only helps learners but also fosters deeper connection between education and culture, contributing to more inclusive and equitable societies. For the transmitting, preserving and developing the culture and heritage, education in ones mother tongue is needed and desirable. For the development and transmitting of literature, education in mother tongue is required. This year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of international Mother Language Day or a quarter century to preserve linguistic diversity and promote mother tongues. This milestone emphasizes the importance of language preservation in safeguarding cultural heritage, improving education, and fostering more peaceful societies. The cultural identity of a group of people or a community is preserved through communication and education as well as preservation of the mother language. As said at the outset, International Mother Language Day, first proclaimed by UNESCO and later adopted by the UNGA, underscores the role of languages in promoting inclusion and achieving sustainable development goals. Multilingual education not only promotes inclusive societies but also aids in preserving non-dominant, minority, and indigenous languages. It is cornerstone for achieving equitable access to education and lifelong learning opportunities for all individuals. Languages, with their complex implications for identity, com-

munication, social integration, education and development, are of strategic importance for people and planet. Yet due to globalization processes, they are increasingly under threat, or disappearing altogether. When languages fade, so does the world's rich tapestry of cultural diversity. Opportunities, traditions, memory, unique modes of thinking, and expression – valuable resources for ensuring a better future are also lost. Every two weeks a language disappears taking with it an entire cultural and intellectual heritage. UNESCO estimates that there are 8,324 languages, spoken or signed. Out of these, around 7,000 languages are still in use. Only a few hundred are genuinely given a place in education systems and public domain, and less than a hundred are used in the digital world. Multilingual and multicultural societies exist through their languages, which transmit and preserve traditional knowledge and cultures in a sustainable way. International Mother Language Day is observed every year to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. It was on 16th May 2007, the UNGA in its resolution A/RES/61/266 called upon Member States "to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world." By the same resolution, the General Assembly proclaimed 2008 as the International Year of Languages, to promote unity in diversity and international understanding, through multilingualism and multiculturalism and named UNESCO to serve as the lead agency for the year. Today, there is growing awareness that languages play a vital and pivotal role in development, ensuring cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, but also in strengthening cooperation and attaining quality education for all, in building inclusive knowledge societies and preserving cultural heritage, and in mobilizing political will for applying the benefits of science and technology

to sustainable development. This day is observed also in India to celebrate linguistic diversity and preserve mother tongue globally, with a special focus on multilingualism in India. India's linguistic diversity is highlighted with languages being more than just a means of communication but also reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage. The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the initiative of Bangladesh. It was approved at 1999 UNESCO General Conference and has been observed throughout the globe since 2000. UNESCO believes in the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity for sustainable development and societies. Globally 40 percent of the population does not have access to an education in a language they speak or understand. UNESCO is calling on the international community as a whole to promote multilingualism, making the richness and diversity of linguistic heritage an instrument of lasting peace. In India our government, NGO's, political parties and the public at large should strive to preserve, promote and develop languages and preserve linguistic diversity amid the ambit of total diversity as India can remain in peace and tranquility through the promotion and preservation of its diverse languages. Let us give education to children in their mother language for good learner outcome and comprehension as well as understanding. We should not only observe 21st February as the International Mother Language Day as a formality but make sincere resolve to foster the idea and need of promoting, preserving and protecting all the languages of India so that linguistic diversity and cultural heritage is preserved and is transmitted through the means of the mother language.

(The author is a columnist, social, KP activist & Freelancer)

Rekha Gupta: The Story of Strength, Struggle and Success

By: Prof. Mahesh Chand Gupta

With Rekha Gupta taking over as the CM of Delhi, a new chapter has been added to politics. Her journey till here has not been easy, rather it is the untold story of her struggles, challenges and tireless hard work. The way she has created her own identity without any political legacy while being active in the organization and public service for three decades is a unique example. BJP giving her the CM's chair is a confirmation of the ideology that gives hard-working workers an opportunity to reach the top. This coronation of Rekha not only reflects the organizational approach of the BJP but is also establishing new equations in Delhi politics.

I have known Rekha since the nineties, when she was studying at Daulat Ram College of Delhi University. As a DU professor, I may not have taught in her college, but I remember how she made her special identity there as an active worker of ABVP. From then on, many people in DU started seeing a glimpse of an influential future leader in her. She started her political journey from college and continued it for three decades and reached the top. Without any political legacy or godfather, Rekha's journey to the highest position of power in Delhi on the strength of her hard work, loyalty and dedication is truly inspiring.

When she was elected as a councillor of Delhi Municipal Corporation from North Pitampura (ward number 54) in 2007, we got the opportunity to know her closely. I myself am a resident of this ward and as a voter, I have seen that Rekha has always given priority to her promises. Even after becoming a Municipal Councillor for the second time in 2012, she discharged her duties honestly. During her tenure, development work gained momentum and every promise made to the public was fulfilled. After this, she was elected as a Municipal Councillor for the third time, although the ward changed but her connection with her old resi-

dents in our ward remained intact. She has always been at the forefront in solving people's problems. She has been equally involved in everyone's happiness and sorrow.

Her role in social organizations has also been very important. Incidentally, I myself am associated with many organizations where Rekha ji plays a key role. I have had the opportunity to closely observe her leadership capabilities in the meetings and other events of these organizations. She is the founder president of Aas Foundation, which works for the education of children, chairperson of the women's committee of Shri Agrasen International Hospital, Rohini and also a trustee of Maharaja Agrasen Hospital, Punjabi Bagh. Apart from this, she is also the patron of many religious and social organizations including the women chairperson of the International Vaishya Conference. Her efficient leadership and association with social concerns have continuously increased her popularity.

Her political journey began in 1994 as the secretary of the student union in college. After this, in 1995, she became the secretary of the Delhi University Students Union and then the president in 1996. After becoming the state minister of BJYM in 2002, national secretary of BJYM in 2004, and municipal councillor from North Pitampura (ward no. 54) in 2007, she took over many important responsibilities. After becoming a councillor for the second time in 2012, she became the chairperson of the Education Committee of Delhi Municipal Corporation. In 2013, she served as the vice-president of the standing committee and minister of BJP National Mahila Morcha. In 2014, she became the general secretary of Delhi Pradesh BJP and contested the Shalimar Bagh assembly elections in 2015 and 2020. In 2021, she became the national vice-president of BJP Mahila Morcha and was again elected as municipal councillor from Shalimar Bagh in 2022. Now, reaching the post of Chief Minister in 2025 is an achievement that very few people are able to achieve.

BJP's decision to make Rekha the

CM in Delhi politics is important in many ways. Arvind Kejriwal comes from the Vaishya community and keeping this fact in mind, the BJP has made Rekha Gupta the Chief Minister so that a clear message can be given to the Vaishya community. Apart from this, after the Aam Aadmi Party's Atishi, the BJP has also given priority to women leadership, which makes it clear that the party is serious about women empowerment.

BJP has made many announcements for women in Delhi and now with a woman on the post of Chief Minister, there is a strong hope of effective implementation of those schemes. This will also boost the morale of the party workers and strengthen the organization. The people of Delhi, especially women, are excited about this decision. This is an important step towards the progress of Delhi and people are hoping that the capital will reach new heights under the leadership of Rekha Gupta.

Rekha Gupta's rise to the post of CM is not just a political success, but it is also the victory of the ideology that considers a person's loyalty and hard work paramount. This decision is not only an inspiration for the BJP workers for those who believe that politics is limited only to dynasty. Modi became the CM of Gujarat at the age of 48. After this, he gave the Gujarat model with his hard work and emerged as a national leader. Since Modi became the PM, BJP has been betting on new faces instead of big and famous faces. This is part of Modi's special strategy of working. After Manohar Lal Khattar and Nayab Singh Saini in Haryana, Devendra Fadnavis in Maharashtra, Mohan Yadav in Madhya Pradesh, Bhajanlal Sharma in Rajasthan, the latest example is Rekha. All the new Chief Ministers of BJP, Mohan Yadav, Bhajanlal Sharma, Yogi Adityanath, Devendra Fadnavis, Rekha Gupta are all 55 years old on an average and they are sure to lead the party in their respective states for the next 20-25 years. There was a time when BJP was called the party of upper castes and Vaishyas, but later Vaishyas did

not get the expected place, but now by making Rekha Gupta the CM, the Vaishya community has come together with BJP. In which direction will Rekha take Delhi politics in the coming times, it is in the womb of future, but her becoming the CM is a source of inspiration for women. As Delhi University Vice Chancellor Prof. Yogesh Singh has said, Rekha will also become a source of inspiration for the students of DU.

As much as I have contact with Rekha, I know how good a person she is. If anyone meets her even once, he will tell how positive she is. Everyone in Shalimar Bagh, Pitampura likes her because of her ever smiling face and her ever-ready-to-help attitude. I remember, when I went to her house last year, she discussed with me about organizing a felicitation ceremony for teachers and professors for Shalimar Bagh and Pitampura area on 8th September. After this, she felicitated about two thousand educationists. Her humble nature makes everyone her friend, she has no enemies. I was sure that she will perform best in the elections. I don't know what inspired me to tell her during the election campaign, when I met her at Shri Jagdish Mandir in Pitampura, that she will become the CM and that is what happened. Now Rekha has really become the catalyst for making Delhi the developed capital of developed India. It is a matter of curiosity for everyone to know in which direction the country's capital will move under her leadership.

(The author is a renowned educationist, thinker and speaker. He is the coordinator of Delhi University Foundation)

Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir to Host Grand Three-Day Maha Shivratri Mahotsav 2025

Featuring Bhajans, Classical Dance, Traditional Rituals and Sacred Processions



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: The historic Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir, one of the oldest Shiva temples in Jammu, is set to host the grand Maha Shivratri Mahotsav 2025 from February 24 to 26, 2025. Organized in collaboration with Directorate of Tourism, Jammu, and J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, the three-day festival will bring together an array of spiritual and cultural programs. Announcing the festival details in a press conference, Suresh Kumar Sharma, Retd Sessions Judge & Receiver Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir, along with Deepak Kumar eminent theatre personality, Yogesh Sharma, Anil Gupta, Pankaj Pradhan and Sanjiv Nirdosh, trade association rep

representatives, and other prominent artists, highlighted the rich blend of tradition, devotion, and artistry that defines this Mahotsav. Speaking on the occasion, Suresh Kumar Sharma said, "Maha Shivratri Mahotsav at Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir is a deeply spiritual and culturally enriching experience. This sacred temple, with its ancient heritage and divine aura, has long been a beacon of faith and devotion for the people of Jammu. Through this festival, we strive to celebrate our rich traditions and provide devotees with a profound opportunity to connect with the divine presence of Lord Shiva." We extend our heartfelt invitation to all devotees, artists, and cultural enthusiasts to be a part of this sacred Mahotsav.

We also urge the media and community leaders to help spread the word so that maximum devotees can participate in this grand celebration of faith, devotion and heritage. Let us come together to make Maha Shivratri Mahotsav 2025 a truly memorable and divine experience. The festival will feature ritualistic Mahadev Abhishek, soulful bhajans, classical dance performances and traditional processions, offering devotees and visitors a deeply immersive experience. The Mahotsav will commence with a Chetna Yatra of Bawa Kalibeer and local deities, starting from Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir and covering prominent city locations before returning to the temple. The revered Dogra Band by Mohan Lal &

Party and Karkan by Natha Ram & Party will accompany the procession, adding a divine & musical charm to the sacred event. Each evening, the temple will host bhajan performances by renowned artists such as Pankaj Pradhan, Dr. Roshni Shaminotra, Dr. Jasmeet Kour, and Dr. Rakesh Kalotra, accompanied by eminent instrumentalists on flute, rhythm, and violin. The festival will also celebrate India's rich classical dance heritage, with Bharatanatyam performances by Neetika Aggarwal and Pallabi Dass Ghosh, and Kathak performances by Nriyanjali under Dr. Priya Dutta. A significant highlight of the Mahotsav will be the symbolic Shiv Vivah, performed by Jangams, marking the celestial

union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. The festival will conclude on February 26 with traditional devotional music by Veer Bhan & Party and light bhajans by Milan Cultural Society, ensuring a blissful and divine culmination of the celebrations. Known as the "Rupaiye Wala Mandir," Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir holds immense spiritual significance, being home to a self-manifest Shiva Lingam (Aap Shambhu). The name "Panjvaktra" translates to "five-faced," signifying the five forms of Lord Shiva - Rudra, Aghora, Vamdeva, Tat Purusha, and Ishana. These five aspects also represent the five Mahabhootas or elements. Legends associate the temple with visits from Adi Shankaracharya and Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, further elevating its sacred status. As one of Jammu's most revered festivals, Shivratri Mahotsav 2025 promises an unforgettable blend of spirituality, tradition, and cultural expression, inviting devotees from across the region to participate in this divine celebration.

Ram Lal, Balbir Rattan release Vishwakarma Reporter Magazine



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: Shree Vishwakarma Library and Research Centre, New Plots - Chairman Ram Lal, BJP Spokesperson & former VC of J&K SC, ST, BC Development Corporation Balbir Ram Rattan, and Ram Pal Chargoita jointly released the latest edition of Vishwakarma Reporter-2024 magazine. On this occasion, notebooks were also distributed to the participating students as part of the event. All executive members of the library congratulated those associated with the magazine and expressed hope that readers would find its content enriching. Library Convener Ramesh Angotra emphasized that the magazine plays a crucial role in addressing social issues, motivating youth toward education, and raising awareness across Jammu and

Kashmir. It also documents a one-year history of the Vishwakarma community. Balbir Ram Rattan, the Chief Guest, lauded the efforts of those involved in compiling the magazine, acknowledging that publishing a community magazine is a challenging task. He stated that such initiatives help integrate the community and ensure that valuable information reaches even the remotest areas. The event proceedings were conducted by Balwant Kataria, who provided insights into the magazine's journey since its inception in 2011. He highlighted that despite the dominance of digital media, print media remains significant. This edition includes moral stories, poetry, news cuttings, tributes, articles, messages, and even a special section dedicated to children. As part of the event, several distinguished individuals were felicitated for their achieve

ments in various fields, including Kalidas Verma (Sarpanch, Sarote), Monu Verma (Social work & media, Khour), Nidhi Chalotra (Renowned Artist), Shashi Dalmotra (Media Person), Malkyat Kumar (Politician), Joginder Angotra and Om Kataria played a key role in compiling data for the magazine and organizing the release function. The event was attended by several prominent, including Mohinder Lal (President, Temple Committee), Kasturi Lal (Principal), Ratan Bhardwaj, BJP Media Member Sanjay Bakshi, J.R. Sagar, Mahesh Pangotra, Santosh Kumari, Abdul Qadir Kundaria (Poet), Hritik Malgotra, Avtar Verma (Punjabi Poet), Kewal Krishan (Panch), Nitu Verma, Pritam Lal Verma (Akhnoor), Harbansh Lal Harsh (Poet, Khour), Brij Salgotra (Retired Joint Director), Satpal Verma, Jayant Chargoita, Akanksha Verma, Nitish Kumar, Kreetika Kataria and Usha.

YLA Elections 2025: intense contest set for March 1

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: The stage is set for a highly anticipated electoral showdown as the Young Lawyers Association (YLA), Jammu, gears up for its 2025 elections. With the deadline for withdrawal of nominations now closed and all candidates officially in the race, the legal fraternity is preparing for a competitive and spirited contest. According to an official statement issued by Advocate Monish Chopra, Chairman of the Election-cum-Scrutiny Committee, and Returning Officer Advocate Rohit Sharma, the elections will see a tripartite battle for the President's position among Aman-deep Sharma, Chander

Dev Manhas, and Manik Wazir. The contest for the Vice-President's post is even more intense, with four candidates—Aanish Dubey, Bhagirath Singh, Jaskaran Singh, and Rishav Vaid—vying for the position. Meanwhile, the remaining three key positions will witness direct duels. Anurag Bakshi and Saksham alias Kanni will compete for the post of General Secretary, while Hitesh Koul and Karuna Atri will contest for Joint Secretary. The race for Treasurer will be between Qadeer Ahmed and Sushil Kumar. The elections are scheduled to be held on March 1, 2025, at the Conference Hall, Lawyers' Chamber, Jammu,

from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The counting of votes will take place the same evening, followed by the official declaration of results. To maintain the decorum and integrity of the electoral process, strict guidelines have been enforced. Candidates are strictly prohibited from affixing stickers, pamphlets, or promotional materials on the walls and surfaces within the Court Complex and Lawyers' Chambers. However, banners and standees may be placed within the Lawyers Chambers Complex, ensuring that no damage or defacement occurs. Additionally, it will be the responsibility of the candidates to remove all campaign materials after the elections.

JPDCL Samba organizes Solar Panel Awareness Drive in collaboration with NAV USHA NGO

Top News Report

SAMBA, Feb 23: Under the leadership of the Assistant Executive Engineer (Electrical), the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL), in collaboration with NAV USHA NGO, has launched an extensive awareness campaign in Samba district to promote the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana among local electricity consumers. The initiative has been conducted across various locations, including Samba, Bari Brahmana, Ramgarh, and Vijaypur, with a total of 30 awareness programs successfully organized since February 1, 2025. As part of the outreach efforts, two nukkad plays and Dogri songs were performed today in

Salam and Sumb areas of Samba district. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the local community, who actively engaged with the message of solar energy benefits. The performances received widespread appreciation from both the public and concerned authorities, leading to a significant turnout for registration under the subsidized solar panel project. During the event, officials explained the benefits of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, highlighting that the total cost of installing a 3-kilowatt solar power system is approximately Rs 1.50 lakh, of which Rs 94,800 (60%) is covered under the government subsidy. Consumers are required to contribute only Rs 64,200 for the installation.

India-Pakistan Match: JKSA advises Kashmiri students to stay away from trouble

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Feb 23: Ahead of the much-anticipated India-Pakistan clash in the ICC Champions Trophy on February 23rd (today), the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) has issued an advisory urging Kashmiri students across the country to take the game in its right spirit and refrain from making social media posts that could land them in trouble. The Jammu and Kashmir Students Association National Convener Nasir Khuehami emphasized that students should treat the match as just another sporting event and avoid any actions that might lead to unnecessary complications. "We have urged Kashmiri students studying across the country to stay focused on their education and career, which is the primary reason they have traveled far from their home state of Jammu and Kashmir,"

he stated. The association also reminded students of the immense sacrifices their families have made—fathers who have worked tirelessly, brothers who have taken loans, sisters who have sold jewelry, and mothers who pray relentlessly for their well-being. He asserted that, Due to past India-Pakistan cricket matches, dozens of students have been detained, arrested, summoned, or booked for their social media activity or involvement in heated debates. Such incidents have led to serious academic and legal consequences, impacting their education and future prospects. Khuehami further stressed that students must see sports as a game and not let emotions dictate their actions. "We strongly advise students to stay away from social media discussions, debates, or any form of online engagement that could escalate into controversy or indiscipline at their institutions. They should

enjoy the game with a true sportsman spirit and avoid engaging in unnecessary conflicts," Association urged. He also highlighted the political connotations and deep emotions attached to an India-Pakistan match, cautioning students to remain vigilant. "Students must understand that by openly cheering for any particular team, they may find themselves in a vulnerable position. It is crucial for them to exercise caution and prioritize their safety on campuses and in their accommodations, keeping in mind the well-being of their families back home," he advised. Khuehami reiterated that sports should promote unity, peace, and camaraderie rather than division and hostility. "Games and sports extend beyond mere entertainment; they teach us about brotherhood, discipline, and harmony. Let this match be a celebration of sportsmanship, not a cause for discord," he added.

NSS SMVDU celebrates International Mother Language Day

Top News Report

KATRA, Feb 23: NSS SMVDU volunteers celebrated International Mother Language Day with mesmerizing performances by volunteers in their mother tongues. Student volunteers Sadhvi Sharma and Parvalliika anchored the event. The event started with the welcome address by the NSS Programme Coordinator, Dr. Rajiv Kumar. He emphasized the importance of promoting mother language in academics and research. Language is the soul



of a culture, vessel of knowledge and a bridge between generations. The cultural events include poetry singing and dancing performances by volunteers in their local languages. Poetry by Rahul Yadav, Suhani Sharma, singing by Santosh, Kriti Mahajan, Abhikash, Iqtida, Abhishek Yadav, Mridul

Salara and Kirti and dancing performances by Tanushka and Ujaswi made the event a memorable one. Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Balbir Singh, DSW, Prof. R. K. Mishra, Head, School of Biotechnology, Prof. Ratna Chandra, T&P Head, B. K. Bhatia graced the occasion.

Farooq, Omar convey condolences

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah former Chief minister, Omar Abdullah Chief Minister and Vice President JKNC and Surinder Choudhary Deputy Chief Minister expressed grief over the passing away of Veena Sharma Wife of Radhey Sham Sharma former Vice Chairman of Kissan Advisory Board and former MLA Nowshera and conveyed condolences to the bereaved family. In their messages, Dr Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Surinder Choudhary prayed to the departed soul rest in peace and expressed solidarity with other members of the family. In the condolence mes-

sage, General Secretary Haji Ali Mohammed Sagar, Dr Sheikh Mustafa Kamaal, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra Additional General Secretaries, Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Javed Ahmad Rana, MLA Mendhar, Ajaz Jan MLA Poonch, Ch. Akram MLA Surankote, Javed Iqbal Choudhary MLA Budhal, Muzaffar Iqbal MLA Thanamandi, Ch. Naseem Liaqyet DDC Chairman Rajouri, Th. Rameshwar Singh DDC Dangri, Mrs Anita Thakur DDC Kalakote, Vipin Pal Sharma, Ashok Kumar Sharma District President Rajouri Rural, Shafayat Ahmad Khan District President Rajouri Urban, Th. Yashvardhan Singh, Zeeshan Rana Additional Spokespersons Jammu have also expressed grief and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

Army distributes books, stationery to underprivileged students in Songri

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Feb 23: As part of its ongoing Sadbhavana project, the Indian Army distributed books and stationery to Below Poverty Line (BPL) students in Songri, Rajouri District. The event was attended by 03 teachers, 39 girls, 58 boys, and 06 villagers. The initiative aimed to invest in the

education and future of underprivileged students from remote areas. By providing essential educational materials, the Indian Army seeks to enhance the students' awareness, improve their educational standards, and empower them to become active contributors to the nation's growth. The students, teachers, and local residents

expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Army for this impactful initiative. The event reinforces the Indian Army's commitment to supporting education and community development in remote and underprivileged areas. By empowering young minds, the Indian Army is contributing to the creation of a brighter future for the nation.

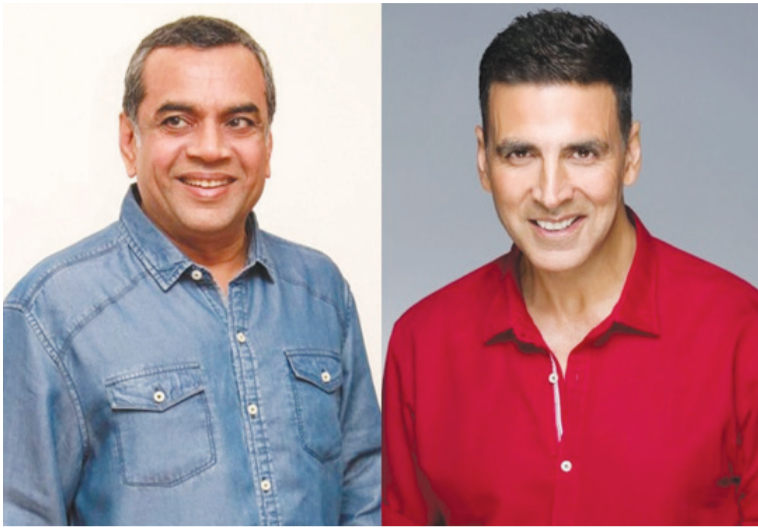
Paresh Rawal says Akshay Kumar should be able to work 'as much as he wants': 'I don't see the issue in it'

Actors Paresh Rawal and Akshay Kumar have acted together in numerous films like Hera Pheri, Bhaagam Bhaag, OMG: Oh My God, Bhooh Bhu-laiyaa and Garam Masala. In an interview with Siddharth Kannan, Paresh responded to a query about the number of films Akshay does in a year and defended his choice to do so.

Paresh Rawal on Akshay Kumar's films

Paresh was asked if Akshay's choice of doing multiple films a year affects the quality of his movies. He defended his choice and replied, "What is your problem if he does so many films? People go to him to make the films, right? Yes, he takes money for it; he's not doing charity. As a producer, I would sign an actor only if I can account for the money I am investing."

He also stated that it's unfair



to even question why Akshay does numerous films a year, adding, "He just likes to work so I don't understand why people point it out. He isn't smuggling, bootlegging, selling drugs, or gambling. He is just working as much as he possibly can. And

more importantly, his films are also a source of employment for thousands. I don't see the issue in it; where is the problem?"

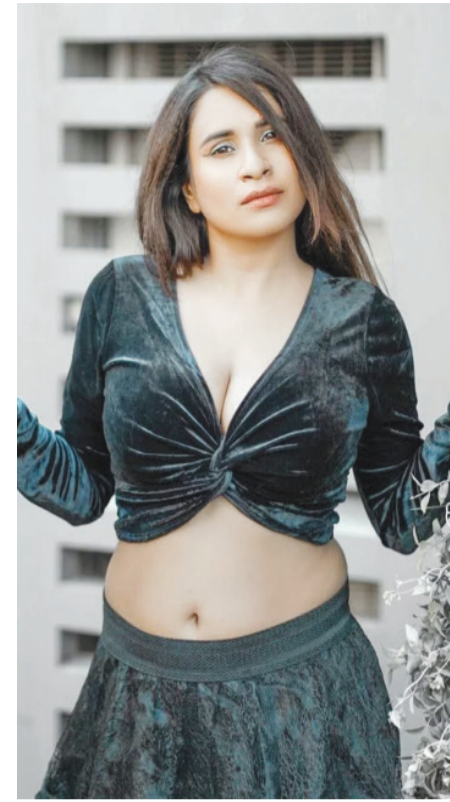
In the same interview, Paresh also spoke about how there's 'no insecurity' in his friendship with Akshay because they both

thrive in their own space. He also called the actor 'extremely hardworking' and 'honest' while praising his integrity. Paresh called earning money while working with Akshay a 'bonus' because he enjoys it.

Recent work

Akshay was last seen in the Air Force drama Sky Force, which also starred Veer Pahariya in his debut, Sara Ali Khan and Nimrat Kaur. He will soon star in Jolly LLLB 3, Housefull 5, Bhooh Bangla, Welcome to the Jungle, Hera Pheri 3, Vedat Marathe Veer Daudle Saat and The Bravery Legendary Untold Story of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, apart from a cameo in the Telugu film Kannappa. Paresh will share the screen with him in Bhooh Bangla, Welcome to the Jungle and Hera Pheri 3. He has also said yes to Badtameez Gill, Thama and The Taj Story.

Muskaan Agarwal takes pride in playing bold characters



Muskaan Agarwal, known for her performances in projects like Shraap, Graduate With First Class, Paurashpur, Chumbak, Love Guru, Namkeen Kisse and Char Saheliyaan, never intended to step into the entertainment industry, but fate had different plans for her!

While Muskaan has played a variety of characters, it was her bold roles that truly garnered attention. "Over time, I have portrayed a variety of genuine characters, but I was truly noticed when I took on a bold role. That performance garnered significant attention, and, since then, my journey in the industry has been going well," she explained.

"I believe being called a 'bold actress' is a recognition of the confidence and versatility I bring to my roles. For me, boldness is not just about the characters I portray, but also about the courage to take on diverse and challenging roles that push boundaries."

Diksha Singh, who plays Juhi in Swipe Crime, is winning over a audiences

Diksha Singh, who plays the enigmatic Juhi in Swipe Crime, is overwhelmed with the love pouring in for the show. But before the applause, there were fun-filled moments on sets that made her journey unforgettable.

Sharing one such memory, Diksha recalled a dance sequence that turned into an unexpected celebration. "I had a scene where Juhi, who loves Bollywood, had to dance. While figuring out the perfect song, we randomly played a Haryanvi track, and Riya, my co-actor, and I just started dancing joyfully. I even have a small clip of that moment on my phone—it was beautiful. Eventually, we danced to Tip Tip Barsa Paani, though it had to be removed later. Still, that moment was pure joy, and I cherish it."

One of the most emotional moments for Diksha came at a blue carpet event when she realised how deeply



the audience connected with her character. "People were calling out

'Juhi! Juhi!' but I couldn't acknowledge it at the time due to the noise!

It is my dream to make 'Mahabharat', want to make more children-related content: Aamir Khan

Superstar Aamir Khan said he is actively working towards bringing his dream project to life a big-screen adaptation of the epic mythological tale Mahabharat.

Speaking at the ABP Network's Ideas of India 2025, the actor also said that he wants to make more content focused on children.

"It is my dream to make 'Mahabharat', so maybe now I'll be able to think of that dream. Let's see if I'll have a role in it to play. What excites me is children's content, I believe in India we make lesser children-related content, usually we import that from abroad, dub it here and release it. I want to make stories about children," Khan said.

The 59-year-old star said he wants to nurture new talent in Bollywood through his production ventures.

"As an actor, I do one film at a time and I'm happy with it. I'm trying to do more films as a producer. Next month I'll turn 60, and for the next 10 to 15 years I want to



do more work and give opportunities to newer talent," Khan said.

He gave the example of his recent production "Laapataa Ladies", which featured newcomers Nitanshi Goel, Pratibha Ranta and Sparsh Shrivastava. The actor produced the Kiran Rao-directed movie through his banner Aamir Khan Productions.

"I want to produce new kinds of stories and give a platform to talent across the country. I

ers.

"We need more cinema halls. In China, there are more than a lakh cinema halls. We've 10,000 cinema halls, we should have cinema halls that will cater to a wide audience," the superstar said.

Khan also spoke about the box office failure of his son Junaid's recent film "Loveyatri", admitting that it left him disheartened.

"I felt the film is good and Junaid also did a good job in it. As a father, I was ten times more stressed for my son's film. Two weeks before the release of the film, I was wondering, 'Why I'm so stressed out about the film? It is not my film, neither I've acted or produced or directed it.' But still I was anxious," he said.

"I felt it was an important moment in my life. This is the emotion of a father. I don't know how to explain it. Whatever we do for our kids we will always think we are not doing much," he added. Junaid will grow and

learn things, said the actor.

"We are doing a film with Junaid, which will be released in November or December. It's a romantic story, it's a good story. This is a field where you've to face success and failure, Junaid is young and he is positive," he said.

As an actor, Khan will next be seen in "Sitaare Zameen Par", which is most likely to come out in theatres by mid-2025.

The upcoming film is a sequel to Khan's 2007 movie "Taare Zameen Par", which marked his directorial debut and received critical acclaim.

"Both films are thematically the same, however, the characters are different. The major difference is, that 'Taare Zameen Par' is an emotional film, and 'Sitaare Zameen Par' is a comedy and humorous movie. It uses humour as the vehicle to narrate a sensitive story. It is like how Raju Hirani's story has drama and uses humour as a tool to narrate a story," Khan said.

Salman Khan's eyes do the talking in new Sikandar poster

Salman Khan's *Sikandar* releases on Eid 2025. The film's shoot is completed, and a new poster has fans excited. Directed by AR Murugadoss, it also stars Rashmika Mandanna and Kajal Aggarwal.

A new poster of Salman Khan's upcoming film *Sikandar*, directed by AR Murugadoss, was unveiled. The latest poster amplifies the excitement around the film, which is set to hit cinemas on Eid, March 28.

The new poster, which Salman shared with the caption, "Sikandar On Eid," features him looking intensely away from the camera.

The production house acknowledged the fans eagerness for *Sikandar* and said, "To all the amazing fans, your patience means the world to us. A little gift on #SajidNadiadwala's birthday, after the love we've received on *Sikandar*!"

Ahead of the poster reveal, Salman Khan wished the film's producer, Sajid Nadiadwala, on his 58th birthday.

While sharing a photo of himself with Sajid, he teased his fans about the poster, writing, "Happy Bday grandson. Looking forward to the poster reveal at 3:33 pm." Salman had previously collaborated with Sajid Nadiadwala for his 2014 action-comedy *Kick* and the romantic comedy *Mujhse Shaadi Karogi*.

Sikandar's first poster was unveiled ahead of Salman's birthday on December 26, 2024. The film's first teaser dropped on the actor's birthday on December 27. It was loved by Salman's fans for his commanding presence, electrifying background music, and high-octane action sequences.

Sikandar, which promises to present Salman in a rugged yet charismatic avatar, is touted to be one of the biggest



films of the year. It has been shot in Hyderabad and Mumbai and also stars Rashmika Mandanna and Kajal Aggar-

wal in pivotal roles. Rashmika spoke about her experience of working with Salman, telling India Today Digital,

"It's absolutely a dream come true. He's such a special person—so down-to-earth and grounded. I was not well on set when we were shooting. The moment he found out, he asked me if I was okay and told the crew to get me healthy food, warm water, and everything."

The makers have now completed the final schedule of the film's shoot. A source close to the production shared with India Today Digital, "The final leg of shooting was completed smoothly at YRF. Salman wrapped up his portions on Sunday, and the team is now focused on post-production. The film is shaping up to be a grand action spectacle."

With filming wrapped up, the makers are gearing up for an extensive promotional campaign for *Sikandar*.

Bhumi Pednekar reveals key references that shaped her role in Mere Husband Ki Biwi



Pednekar shared, "Mudassar sir's hold on the language is very strong. Most of my work references came from. Whenever my language went off-track, he would always correct me," she explained. She added, "I feel very fortunate to have gotten a character like this with him because I was very protected."

Bhumi also reflected on the uniqueness of playing such a character, "I haven't done a film like this before, nor have I played a character like this. When I read the script, I found many similarities between me and my character."

Mere Husband Ki Biwi also stars Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh. The film follows a Delhi professional caught in a complicated love triangle when his former lover reappears just as he starts falling for someone new, resulting in a series of comedic misunderstandings. It was released in cinemas on February 21.

Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar recently opened up about the reference she drew for her character in the film *Mere Husband Ki Biwi*. The actress plays the role of Prableen, a typical Punjabi woman whose personality traits drive much of the film's intriguing storyline.

Bhumi shared that most of her references for portraying her

character came from her director, Mudassar Aziz. She revealed that Mudassar's strong grip on language helped her refine her portrayal. The Dum Laga Ke Haisha actress also expressed gratitude for working with him, as she felt protected and supported throughout the process, allowing her to explore and embody the role fully.

PM Modi hails ISRO, urges people to dedicate a day for science

Says this during his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' address

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday praised the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for its continued success in space sector saying the field has become a favourite choice of career for today's youth.

"I will talk about the wonderful century that India has made in space. Last month, the country was a witness to ISRO's 100th rocket launch. This is not just a number but it rather shows our resolve to achieve new heights in space science," Modi said during his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' address.

He said India's space journey started in a normal manner where there were challenges at every step but scientists continued moving forward and achieving success.

"With time, the list of our achievements in space science continues to grow longer. Be it building a launch vehicle, or success of Chandrayaan, Mangalyaan, Aditya L1, or carrying out the unprecedented mission of sending 104 satellites into



space at one go with one rocket. The ambit of ISRO's success is quite large," Modi said.

The PM said that in the past 10 years, around 460 satellites had been launched and these included many satellites of other countries.

He also mentioned the growing participation of women in the space sector.

"One major thing of recent years has been that in our team of space scientists, participation of women power has been increasing," the PM said.

Modi expressed happiness at the youth showing an inclination towards the space sector.

"I am happy to see that today the space sector has become a favourite of our youth. Just a few years back, who would have thought that in this sector the number of startups and private sector space companies would reach hundreds. For our youth who want to do something thrilling and exciting in life, the space sector is becoming an excellent option.

With National Science Day

approaching, the Prime Minister urged students and young minds to cultivate a passion for science.

He introduced the idea of 'One Day as a Scientist,' encouraging people to visit research labs, planetariums, or space centres to experience the scientific process firsthand. He emphasised that such experiences would enhance curiosity and deepen understanding.

The Prime Minister also spoke about India's achievements in artificial intelligence. Sharing his experience from a recent AI conference in Paris, he stated that global leaders had acknowledged India's rapid progress in the sector. This recognition, he said, reflected the country's growing influence in cutting-edge technology.

The monthly radio programme, airing on All India Radio, Door-darshan, and digital platforms, remains a significant medium for the Prime Minister to connect with citizens. PM Modi shared a picture on X, reminding people to tune in for this edition of Mann Ki Baat.

62 Crore devotees have come to Maha Kumbh, one of century's rarest events: UP CM



AGRA (UP), Feb 23 (Agencies): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Sunday that 62 crore devotees have come to the Maha Kumbh so far and the gathering of such a large number of people during a certain period is in itself "one of the rarest events of the century".

Welcoming all the guests at the Unicorn Companies Conclave in Agra, Chief Minister Yogi said, "I can call

it the Unicorn Maha Kumbh of the startup world. There is an attraction towards the Maha Kumbh at this time."

He said, "This is important for me. Today, I have come to Braj Bhoomi, behind which there has been a spiritual and cultural background. It has influenced India's civilisation and culture for a long time." Chief Minister Adityanath while talking about the

devotees coming to the Maha Kumbh this time, said that so far 62 crore devotees have come to the event.

"I think that in any event in the world, whether it is spiritual or for any tourism purpose, the gathering of such a large number of people during a certain period of time in that ceremony and being united with that event, is in itself one of the rarest events of the century," he said.

Adityanath, who is also the Mahant of the Gorakshapeeth, remarked that it must have been envisioned that a time would come when people in India might feel disconnected from their traditions and culture. He said that the Kumbh would serve as a powerful medium to re-establish that vital connection, bringing the people back to their spiritual roots and cultural heritage.

Army chief to visit France, to be briefed about future combat

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): Army chief Gen Uendra Dwivedi will be on a four-day visit to France from February 24 to 27 as part of the efforts to bolster the India-France defence cooperation.

The Army chief will engage with senior military leadership of France at Les Invalides, Paris.

The day will begin with a Guard of Honour followed by discussions with French Army chief Gen Pierre Schill. The two will look to foster stronger military ties between the two nations.

The itinerary includes a visit to the French Military School and Institution Complex in Paris, where Gen Dwivedi will be briefed on future combat command. He will be briefed at the technical section of the French Army and visit the 'battle lab' at Versailles.

He will also travel to Marseille, where he will visit the 3rd Division of the French Army and will be briefed on the mission and role of the 3rd Division, the bilateral exercise Shakti, India-France training cooperation, and the French Army modernisation programme (Scorpion).

Gen Dwivedi will visit Carpiagne to



witness a dynamic demonstration of the Scorpion division with live firing exercises.

The Army chief will also visit the Neuve Chapelle Indian War Memorial to lay a wreath in honour of the fallen Indian soldiers who participated in World War I. Later in the day, he will deliver a talk at the French Joint Staff College, highlighting the evolving nature of modern warfare and India's strategic vision.

The Ministry of Defence said on Sunday, "General Dwivedi's visit aims to strengthen the military collaboration between India and France, exploring new avenues of cooperation and enhancing strategic partnerships between the two nations' armed forces."

Rescue teams inch closer to workers trapped in Telangana tunnel

HYDERABAD, Feb 23 (Agencies): Rescuers have inched closer to the engineers and workers trapped inside a tunnel after a section of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal project collapsed 24 hours ago, with operations under way to extricate them, officials said on Sunday.

The teams at the accident site in Nagarkurnool district, about 150 km from here, called out the names of the trapped people, but there was no response, sources said.

The rescue personnel were able to reach up to the 13th km inside the tunnel, a short distance from where the mishap occurred around 8.30 am on Saturday.

According to official sources, state Ministers N Uttam Kumar Reddy and J Krishna Rao have left for the site to oversee the rescue operations.

"Rescuers will have to clear the debris filled with iron, muck and cement blocks. The teams were able to reach up to the 13th



km where the collapse occurred. They are assessing the situation at the place where the Tunnel Boring Machine was last placed on Saturday," sources told PTI.

"The (rescue) teams have reached almost up to the last point (till the machine). We are assessing the situation," a senior police official said on Sunday.

Of the eight, six (two engineers and four labourers) belong to

Jaiprakash Associates and two are employees of a US company.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called up Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to enquire about the incident and assured all possible assistance for the rescue operation.

On Sunday, the rescue operation was on, involving the NDRF, SDRF, Army personnel and the

company's employees.

After the construction work resumed recently, as many as 50 people went inside the tunnel in the first shift along with the tunnel boring machine which is 200 metre long, on Saturday morning.

They went up to 13.5 km inside the tunnel when the roof collapsed suddenly. Eight members including two engineers, who were ahead of the machine got trapped while 42 others ran towards the outside gate of the tunnel and came out.

Uttam Kumar Reddy had said the work on the "world's longest tunnel of 44 km" began to draw water from the Srisailem project to irrigate four lakh acres in Nalgonda district. Of the 44 km, work on about 9.5 km remains to be carried out, he said.

Revanth Reddy was constantly reviewing the situation and he instructed the officials to expedite the rescue operation to save those trapped, the government said.

Bangladeshi artistes break ice, perform at Maha Kumbh

PRAYAGRAJ, Feb 23 (Agencies): While politics and diplomacy struggled to mend the bridge, faith seems to have pulled off the job with elan.

In what looked to be the first official cultural exchange between India and Bangladesh since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in August last year and the subsequent unrest in the neighbouring nation where minority Hindus were allegedly targeted, a group of Bangladeshi artistes were partly sponsored by the Muhammad Yunus regime to perform at the Maha Kumbh.

A six-member dance troupe from Bangladesh performed at the Kumbh's 13,000-seater Ganga Pandal, the makeshift central cultural hub, on Saturday evening at the inaugural session of the 10th India International Dance and Music Festival.

The event was hosted jointly by the UP government and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), which

works under the Ministry of External Affairs.

The participation followed Bangladesh's absence from key cultural events in India, such as the recently concluded International Kolkata Book Fair 2025 and the 30th Kolkata International Film Festival in December last year. Bangladesh had been a consistent participant in these events until recently. The troupe, part of a 107-member delegation of foreign artistes representing 10 nations, was led by Rachel Priyanka Persis, an assistant professor at Dhaka University's dance department.

The troupe showcased the Gaudiya dance, a Vaishnava form based on religious stories, poetry and music.

Following their two-day performance at the Mahakumbh on February 22 and 23, the delegation is scheduled to perform in Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Bihar, Assam and Meghalaya before their final show in Delhi later this month.

"I feel fortunate to be able to perform amid this sea of humanity. The Maha Kumbh carries a spiritual legacy of 144 years. I would thank the Indian High Commission for its invitation. We had no problems in obtaining our visas," Priyanka said and introduced the other members of her team — Mousumi, Laboni, Rini, Raisa and Pinki.

Participating alongside India and Bangladesh were artistes from Russia, Mongolia, Rwanda, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Vietnam, Malaysia, South Africa and Fiji, officials said.

The event was part of the Cultural Exchange Programme Agreement (CEPA) between India and several nations, aimed at promoting Indian culture abroad and exposing local artistes to international art and culture, they said.

"According to CEPA, the ICCR shoulders the financial burden of the visiting artistes in terms of their accommodation, local transport and visa arrangements. The

respective foreign government, on the other hand, pays for their airfare. The arrangement was honoured by the Bangladeshi government like all other foreign nations," said ICCR Director General K Nandini Singla.

She highlighted the role of culture and spirituality in building bonds between people where relations have strained on account of changing politics. "Culture never stops to connect," she said, "Governments may come and go, politics and leaders may change but the heart-to-heart bonds don't fade because they are built on emotions. No political leader may come and change the way you look at another country or a different culture. That's why our connections with countries have endured for millennia."

The DG built on the theme of the evening's performance, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — the Upanishadic phrase meaning 'the world is one family', to elaborate her point.

"The theme reflects the 'sangam' of culture. Performing at the Maha Kumbh, where the confluence of three rivers creates divinity, would entail the core message that we are one. The Kumbh is a great equaliser. True, one could be a Bangladeshi and face political difficulties, but at the end of the day, we are all humans with the same aspirations, needs and fears. Those emotions of the heart always overpower the thought processes of the brain," she said. A joint performance of all artistes has been choreographed by renowned Kathak exponent Rani Khanum to form the evening's crescendo on stage following the showcasing of individual cultures by the nations, officials said.

"This is the first time that ICCR is holding the inauguration of the international dance festival outside Delhi," ICCR's Deputy Director General Anju Ranjan.

"After all, this opportunity has come to us after 144 years and we could not let it go," she added.

Centre 'studying' legal provisions to regulate obscene digital content



NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): Amid an advisory to OTT platforms against transmitting obscene content, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has said that there is a need to revisit the existing laws on the subject.

The admission was made before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology this week.

Making a deposition before the panel, the ministry said it was in the process of reviewing existing statutory provisions and considering requirements for a reworked legal framework on regulation of harmful content on digital platforms.

The move follows the controversy over vulgar remarks made by YouTube influencer Ranveer Allahbadia during a show on the digital platform. The Supreme Court had issued directions on the regulation of such content.

Presenting its stand to the panel, which took up the agenda this week, the ministry cited growing social concerns around freedom of expression being misused to peddle obscene, vulgar, violent content on digital platforms.

It said certain provisions existed in the current laws but equally there was a growing chorus for a stricter and more effective legal framework on social

media content.

"This ministry has taken note of these developments and is in process of examining current statutory provisions and need for a new legal framework," said the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting representatives citing directions of the SC and several high courts on the issue besides references by parliamentarians and the National Commission for Women.

Allahbadia is facing criminal cases in Assam and Maharashtra for his remarks that were pulled off YouTube.

The SC this week stayed fresh FIRs against the influencers while castigating his remarks as "perverted".

Even the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ruling BJP's parent body, has been demanding fresh legislation to regulate OTT platforms. RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat had, in his Vijaydashami address on October 12 last year, called for an urgent legislation to regulate OTT content.

Israel delays release of Palestinian prisoners, citing 'humiliating' handovers of hostages

The statement by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office came early Sunday as vehicles apparently carrying prisoners left the open gates of Ofer prison, only to turn around and go back in

TEL AVIV, Feb 23 (Agencies): Israel says the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners is delayed "until the release of the next hostages has been assured, and without the humiliating ceremonies" at handovers of Israeli captives in Gaza.

The statement by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office came early Sunday as vehicles apparently carrying prisoners left the open gates of Ofer prison, only to turn around and go back in.

The release of 620 Palestinian prisoners had been delayed for several hours and was meant to occur just after six Israeli hostages were released on Saturday. It was meant to be the largest one-day prisoner release in the Gaza ceasefire's first phase.

Five of the six hostages freed Saturday were escorted by masked, armed militants in front of a crowd — a display that the UN and others have criticised as cruel after previous handovers.

The Israeli statement cited "ceremonies that demean the dignity of our hostages and the cynical use of the hostages for propaganda purposes". It was likely a reference to a Hamas video showing two hostages who have yet to be released watching a handover in Gaza on Saturday and speaking under duress.

Hamas had released the last six living hostages expected under the ceasefire's first phase, with a week remaining in the initial stage.

Israel's announcement abruptly put the future of the truce into further doubt.

Freed were three Israeli men seized from the Nova music festival and another taken while visiting family in southern Israel during the Hamas-led October 7, 2023, attack that triggered the 16-month war in Gaza. The two others were held for a decade after entering Gaza on their own.

Five were handed over in



staged ceremonies that the Red Cross and Israel have condemned as cruel and disrespectful.

Omer Wenkert, Omer Shem Tov and Eliya Cohen were posed alongside Hamas fighters. A beaming Shem Tov, acting under duress, kissed two militants on the head and blew kisses to the crowd. They wore fake army uniforms, though they were not soldiers when abducted.

Cohen's family and friends in Israel chanted "Eliya! Eliya! Eliya!" and cheered.

"You're heroes," Shem Tov told his parents as they later embraced, laughing and crying. "You have no idea how much I dreamt of you." His father, Malki Shem Tov, told public broadcaster Kan his son was held alone after the first 50 days and lost 17 kilograms (37 pounds).

Earlier Saturday, Tal Shoham, 40, and Avera Mengistu, 38, were freed. Mengistu, an Ethiopian-Israeli, entered Gaza in 2014. His family told Israeli media he has struggled with mental health issues. The Israeli-Austrian Shoham was taken from Kibbutz Be'eri. His wife and two children were freed in a 2023 exchange.

Later, Israel's military said Hisham Al-Sayed, 36, was released. The Bedouin Israeli entered Gaza in 2015. His family has told Israeli media he was previously diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Israel's government didn't respond to questions about the delay in releasing prisoners. Hamas accused Israel of violating the ceasefire deal, with spokesperson Abdel Latif Al-Qanou accusing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of "deliberately stalling".

The hostage release followed a heartrending dispute when Hamas on Thursday handed over the wrong body for Shiri Bibas, an Israeli mother abducted with her two young boys. The remains were determined to be those of a Palestinian woman. Netanyahu vowed revenge for "a cruel and malicious violation". Hamas suggested it was a mistake.

Israeli forensic authorities confirmed a body handed over on Friday was Bibas. Dr. Chen Kugel, head of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine, said they found no evidence Bibas and her children were killed in an Israeli airstrike, as Hamas has claimed. Kugel did not give a cause.

Hamas denied the Israeli military claim, based on forensic evidence and unspecified "intelligence", that its militants killed the children "with their bare hands", calling it a lie aimed at justifying Israeli military actions against civilians in Gaza.

The ceasefire deal has paused the deadliest and most devastating fighting ever between Israel and Hamas, but there are

fears the war will resume.

Hamas has said it will release four bodies next week, completing the truce's first phase. After that, Hamas will hold over 60 hostages — about half believed to be alive.

Talks on the ceasefire's second phase are yet to start, but negotiations are likely to be more difficult.

Hamas has said it won't release the remaining captives without a lasting ceasefire and full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

An Israeli official said Netanyahu would meet with security advisers on Saturday evening about the ceasefire's future, focusing "on the goal of returning all our hostages, alive and dead". The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting had not been formally announced.

Wenkert, Cohen, Shoham and Shem Tov had an "extremely difficult period in captivity", the Beilinson hospital said, but it did not give details at the families' request.

Niva Wenkert, Omer's mother, told Israel's Channel 12 that "on the surface, he looks OK, but there's no telling what's inside".

Families and others rallied again Saturday night in Tel Aviv to pressure Netanyahu's government for a deal.

Hamas later released a video showing two hostages still held, Evyatar David and Guy Gilboa Dallal, as they sat in a vehicle and spoke under duress at the handover for Shem Tov, Cohen and Wenkert. A group representing hostages' families called the video "sickening".

The 620 Palestinian prisoners meant to be freed include 151 serving life or other sentences for attacks against Israelis. Almost 100 would be deported, according to the Palestinian prisoners' media office.

Also meant to be released are 445 men, 23 children aged 15 to 19, and a woman, all seized by Israeli troops in Gaza without charge during the war.

PoGB: "Education department's failures have been repeatedly exposed", says civil society representative



GILGIT, Feb 23

(Agencies): Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan's education system is facing a serious crisis, with alarmingly high failure rates exposing deep-rooted issues in the region's administration. Civil society representative Faheem Akhtar has raised concerns over the repeated failures of the education department, stating, "This is not the first time that the education department's failures have been exposed. Previously, during the intermediate exams, a large number of students were unable to pass. Similarly, this year, around 60 to 70 per cent of students in fifth and eighth grade have failed."

One of the key issues affecting education in Gilgit-Baltistan is the frequent transfer of experienced teachers into administrative roles. "As soon as someone gains even a little teaching ability, they shift into administrative roles," Akhtar said. "Most of the competent teachers have moved into positions such as directors and other administrative posts, which has dis-

rupted the education system." These roles come with additional benefits but take qualified teachers away from classrooms, leaving students without proper instruction.

Budget allocation for education in the region remains inadequate. "Compared to other provinces, the allocation for education in Gilgit-Baltistan is the lowest," Akhtar pointed out. He added that while a significant portion of the non-development budget—over 10 billion rupees—is spent on salaries for education department employees, there is little accountability regarding how resources are used. Meanwhile, students in many areas are forced to study outdoors in extreme weather conditions due to the lack of proper school infrastructure.

The examination system in the region has also failed to ensure quality education. "If only 28 per cent of students pass, that means the entire department has failed," Akhtar stated. "If an individual student scoring below 40 per cent is considered a failure, then when

the overall pass rate is below 28 per cent, the department itself should be held accountable."

A lack of clear policies and curriculum planning further adds to the problem. Akhtar noted that civil society had proposed including local languages in the curriculum, but despite developing frameworks, there was no implementation. "Education is not just about language but understanding. Yet, we have an education system that relies on rote learning rather than conceptual understanding," he said.

He also pointed out the hypocrisy in the system, where government officials send their children to private schools while public schools continue to decline. "They drop their children off at private schools and then go to work in government schools, expecting others to teach there," he remarked.

The situation is even worse in remote areas, where limited access to education affects students' overall learning outcomes. The lack of proper infrastructure, combined with the absence of vocational training and higher education opportunities, further hinders the region's development. "Education is a long-term process that requires sustained efforts, but instead, we see short-term projects with no lasting impact," Akhtar emphasised.

Without immediate intervention, the future prospects of young people in Gilgit-Baltistan will continue to suffer, leaving the region further behind in development.

Meloni slams Left's double standards, saying when Trump, Milei, Modi and I talk, it's called threat to democracy

WASHINGTON, Feb 23 (Agencies): Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has slammed the Left "double standards" in perceiving conservatives globally, saying when leaders like herself, US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi collaborate they are called a "threat to democracy" while leftist leaders are praised for similar alliances.

Meloni's remarks came as she addressed the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington via video link from Rome.

During the address, Meloni praised Trump and said the Left is nervous about Trump's victory.

"Their irritation has turned into hysteria, not only because conservatives are winning, but because conservatives are now collaborating globally."

"When Bill Clinton (former US president) and Tony Blair (former British prime minister) created the global leftist liberal network in the 90s, they were called statesmen.



"Today, when Trump, Maloni, (President of Argentina Javier) Milei or maybe Modi talk, they are called a threat to democracy. This is the last double standard, but we are used to it, and the good news is people no longer believe in their lies, despite all the mud they throw at us. Citizens keep voting for us," said Meloni.

She said people vote for them as "we defend freedom, we love our nations, we want secure borders, we preserve businesses and citizens from the green leftist insanity and we defend family life."

"We fight against wokeism...and we stand for common sense," she said.

People are not as naive as the Left considers them, she said.

Meloni said that the United States and Europe would remain close under Trump, despite soaring tensions between the allies including over Ukraine.

Ties between Europe and the United States have been strained in the first weeks of Trump's second term after the US leader reached out to Russia and warned of a shift away from Europe, raising fears of Trump's commitment to the NATO alliance.

"Our adversaries hope that President Trump will move away from us (Europe)," Meloni said.

But, "knowing him as a strong and effective leader I bet that those who hope for divisions will be proven wrong," she said.

China denies it didn't give timely warning of live-fire drills off Australia

BEIJING, Feb 23 (Agencies): China's Defense Ministry said Sunday that Australia had made "unreasonable accusations" and deliberately hyped the situation after three planes headed to New Zealand changed course in midflight because of live-fire drills by the Chinese navy.

Wu Qian, the ministry's top spokesperson, said China had issued safety notices in advance and that the activity was in

compliance with international law and did not affect aviation safety.

"The relevant remarks from the Australian side are completely inconsistent with the facts," he said in a response posted on the Defense Ministry website.

Three passenger flights from Sydney to Christchurch and Queenstown were in the air Friday when they were first warned by a Chinese warship of a

live-fire exercise, Australian media reported.

The flights diverted and no one was put in danger, Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. But he also said the Australian navy would typically give 12 to 24 hours' notice of a live-fire exercise to give airlines time to plan around it.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong

said she sought an explanation from her Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, when the two met in Johannesburg on Saturday following a gathering of foreign ministers from the Group of 20 nations.

"I raised Australia's expectations around safe and professional military conduct, consular cases, human rights and other issues of concern," Wong said in a post on the social plat-

form X. "I also sought an explanation for Chinese naval vessels conducting live fire drills without advance notification."

The presence of the three Chinese warships in the region — a frigate, a cruiser and a replenishment vessel — had gotten the attention of the Australian and New Zealand militaries earlier last week. Marles described the activity as unusual, though not unprecedented.

China ups military activity around Taiwan

TAIPEI, Feb 23 (Agencies): Taiwan's Ministry of Defence (MND) reported on Sunday that it had detected 11 sorties of Chinese aircraft, six Chinese vessels, and two official ships operating near Taiwan.

All of the aircraft crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's southwestern and eastern ADIZ.

In a post on X, the Taiwanese MND stated, "11 sorties of PLA aircraft, 6 PLAN vessels and 2 official ships operating around Taiwan were detected up until

6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 11 sorties crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's southwestern and eastern ADIZ. We have monitored the situation and responded accordingly."

Earlier on Saturday, China launched satellites from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center, which flew over Taiwan towards the Western Pacific, Taiwan's Ministry of Defence (MND) stated.

The Taiwanese MND further said on Saturday that though their armed forces are ready to respond, this launch

does not pose a threat.

In a post on X, it said, "At 8:11 p.m. (UTC+8), China launched satellites from XSLC, with the flight path over central Taiwan toward the Western Pacific. The altitude is beyond the atmosphere, posing no threat. ROC Armed Forces monitored the process and remain ready to respond."

Meanwhile, on Saturday, Taiwan's MND detected eight sorties of Chinese aircraft, seven Chinese vessels, two official ships and three Chinese balloons in its territory.

Three sorties out of the eight crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern and southwestern ADIZ.

In a post on X, Taiwan's MND said, "8 sorties of PLA aircraft, 7 PLAN vessels and 2 official ships operating around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 3 sorties crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern and southwestern ADIZ. 3 PRC balloons were detected during this timeframe."

Earlier on Friday, the Taiwanese Armed Forces concluded the

high-level tabletop exercise where their Defence Minister Wellington Koo Li-hsiung recognized the dedication of all participants and urged all units to continue enhancing combat readiness.

In a post on X, the MND said, "The ROC Armed Forces high-level tabletop exercise concluded successfully yesterday. Defense Minister Wellington Koo Li-hsiung recognized the dedication of all participants and urged all units to continue enhancing combat readiness for national defence operations."

Motivational Session conducted for students of JNV Reasi



Top News Report

REASI, Feb 23: The Indian Army conducted a motivational session at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) Reasi District, to inspire students to join the armed forces and serve the

nation.

The session was attended by 52 students and 10 teachers, who actively participated in the interactive event. During the session, Indian Army officials provided valuable insights

into the career opportunities in the Indian Army, eligibility criteria and the rigorous training process.

They highlighted the honor, discipline and commitment required to serve in the armed forces. Students were

encouraged to pursue their dreams of joining the Indian Army and contribute to national security and development.

The session also included real-life experiences shared by Indian Army personnel, inspir-

ing stories of valor, and a Question & Answer segment where students clarified their doubts regarding recruitment procedures and life in the Indian Army.

The event aimed to instill a sense of patriotism, dedication and determination among the young minds.

The teachers and students expressed their gratitude to the Indian Army for organizing the session and providing guidance on career prospects in the defence sector. The initiative was widely appreciated and is expected to motivate many students to consider a future in the armed forces.

The Indian Army remains committed to engaging with the youth and guiding them towards meaningful careers that serve the nation with pride and honor.

HSS Seri Khawaja junior wins Pir Panchal Kho Kho Tournament



Top News Report

POONCH, Feb 23: The Pir Panchal Kho Kho Tournament culminated in a spectacular showdown, as Team HSS Seri Khawaja junior triumphed in a thrilling final against Dream Club Kho Kho, Poonch.

Kicking off on February 17, the tournament showcased high-intensity competition, with teams demonstrating exceptional agility, strategic prowess, and unwavering determination.

The grand finale was a remarkable display

of speed, coordination, and resilience, with both teams delivering stellar performances.

The electric atmosphere was further amplified by an enthusiastic crowd, passionately cheering for their favorite players.

Despite a fierce challenge from Dream Club Kho Kho, Poonch, Team HSS Seri Khawaja Junior held their nerve and clinched the championship title, exhibiting extraordinary skill, endurance, and sportsmanship.

The tournament concluded with a prestigious prize distribution

ceremony, where the Champion Team, Runners-up, Best Player, and other outstanding performers were honored for their dedication and contributions to the sport.

As an integral part of the Pir Panchal Winter Festival, the Kho Kho tournament embodied the spirit of youth and the Indian Army, serving as a platform that nurtures passion, discipline, and competitive excellence. The festival continues to reinforce the unifying power of sports, fostering teamwork, resilience, and camaraderie among aspiring athletes.

GGHSS Miran Sahib ranked Number-2 in J&K UT in EWISR 2024-25 ranking



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: Ashok Kumar Chopra Principal Government Girls Higher Secondary School Miran Sahib received very prestigious award from Chief Education officer Jammu after School ranked Number-2 in J&K UT and 1ST in Jammu District among India's top schools in EWISR 2024 - 25 ranking under the leadership of Principal GGHSS Miran Sahib. The award was given in District level ERA award felicitation ceremony organized by Bharti Airtel Foundation in GGHSS Bakshi Nagar. This recognition is a testament to his leadership and the school's commitment to providing quality education.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Ashok Kumar Chopra said that, "All-round development of students my prime motto," reflects his commitment to providing a holistic education that goes beyond academics. This approach recognizes that students' overall growth and development are crucial for their future success and well-being. By prioritizing all-round development, Principal Chopra aims to foster an environment that encourages students to achieve their full academic potential,

helps students acquire essential skills like communication, teamwork and problem-solving.

Chopra observed that good education encourages students to understand and manage their emotions, leading to better mental health and relationships provides opportunities for students to explore their creative side and develop innovative thinking. It supports students' physical health through sports and activities, while also promoting mental well-being through counseling and guidance. Good teachers teach students the importance of values like empathy, respect and responsibility, preparing them to become responsible citizens. By focusing on all-round development, School is committed to helping his students become well-rounded, confident, and capable individuals who are prepared to succeed in all aspects of life, added Chopra.

Chopra underscored co-curricular activities play a vital role in a student's overall development, complementing their academic learning and fostering essential life skills. These activities are crucial for students because Co-curricular activities help students develop important soft skills like communication, teamwork, leadership, and

problem-solving.

Engaging in co-curricular activities like art, music, or drama encourages creativity, self-expression, and imagination. Participating in co-curricular activities helps students build confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of accomplishment.

Chopra stated that Co-curricular activities provide opportunities for students to interact with peers, develop social skills and form meaningful relationships. Activities like sports, yoga, or meditation contribute to students' physical and mental health, reducing stress and anxiety. Balancing co-curricular activities with academic responsibilities helps students learn time management, prioritization, and organization skills.

Many co-curricular activities, such as volunteer work or environmental clubs, promote community service, empathy, and social responsibility.

Co-curricular activities add depth, variety, and enjoyment to the educational experience, making it more holistic and fulfilling.

By participating in co-curricular activities, students can develop a wide range of skills, build their confidence and character, and enhance their overall educational experience, added Chopra.

SSH, Nirankari Mission organize cleanliness drive in Nowshera's Changar area

Top News Report

NOWSHERA, Feb 23: Shiv Sena Hindustan, in collaboration with Nirankari Mission today organized a cleanliness drive in Nowshera's Changar area in presence of Nirankari Mission Head of area Tirth Ram, Sarpanch Sunil Choudhary and Shiv Sena Hindustan J&K leadership including Vice President Balbir Kumar. Speaking on the occasion, Kesri said this initiative demonstrates the organization's commitment to promoting cleanliness and community service. Shiv Sena Hindustan has been involved in various social activities, including religious events and meetings. The cleanliness drive is likely part of their efforts to contribute to the well-being of the community and promote a cleaner environment, added Kesri.

Kesri further said that Shiv Sena Hindustan and Nirankari Mission organized awareness program to highlight the significance of cleanliness. The event aimed to educate the local community about the importance of maintaining a clean environment, its impact on public health, and the role individuals can play in keeping their surroundings clean. The cleanliness drive also included interactive sessions, speeches, and demonstrations to engage the audience and convey the message effectively. By organizing such events, Shiv Sena Hindustan and Nirankari Mission hope to inspire a sense of responsibility among the community

members to maintain cleanliness and contribute to a healthier environment, added Kesri.

Kesri observed that clean and green surroundings have numerous benefits for individuals, communities, and the environment as a whole. Clean and green surroundings help conserve natural resources like water, air, and soil. Green spaces support local biodiversity, preserving ecosystems and protecting endangered species. Vegetation helps regulate the climate by absorbing carbon dioxide, producing oxygen, and moderating temperatures. Green surroundings reduce air pollution, improving respiratory health and overall well-being. Spending time in nature has been shown to reduce stress levels, improve mood, and enhance mental health.

Kesri maintained that clean and green surroundings encourage outdoor activities, promoting physical health and fitness and foster a sense of community, promoting social connections and neighborhood cohesion. Well-maintained green spaces can increase property values, attract businesses, and boost local economies and enhance the visual appeal of an area, making it more attractive and inviting. By recognizing the significance of clean and green surroundings, individuals and communities can work together to create healthier, more sustainable, and more livable environments, said Kesri.

Athrot Cultural Foundation organises "Dyar Daham Vatakh Raaze Event"



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: Athrot Cultural Foundation supported by KPV organised Dyar Daham Vatakh Raaze Event at Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra Bhoori Jammu today and Dr. Arvind Karwani Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants) was the chief guest on the occasion.

Sharda Stuti was sung while showering flowers at the lotus feet of Mata Sharda in the beginning followed by an elaborated talk by religious scholar Sanjay Raina wherein he introduced the Vatakh Mandap to the gathering and elaborated the essence of Harratri and Triyodashi part and significance of Heyrat for Kashmiri Pandits Each and every aspect was deliberated upon with evidence and references.

Sanjay Raina was felicitated by Dr Arvind Karwani RRCM on this occasion accompanied

by Vikram Koul KPV, Muktesh Yogi (Social Activist and Dr Rohit Koul (Director and CEO People's Hut Foundation).

A Shawl, Kenzi Khoass and Mata Roop Bhawani Book was presented to Sanjay Raina for his commendable service, Kirti Dhar from Shine India News was also felicitated for her valuable contribution in the field of Journalism she was presented a shawl, kaos and a Book.

Pranav Pandita an upcoming singer who has versatile singing style was also felicitated with shawl and kenzi Khoass for his dedication and determination in the field of music.

Kamal Bagati was also felicitated for valuable community Services. A devotional song "Naad Be Layea" with divine blessings and shots from Prayagraj was released by Dr Arvind Karwani during the event.

The song has been

written by Posht Motte and Sung by Kanwal Peshin, Music has been beautifully composed by Rajesh Khar (Kongposh studio) supported by Sanjay Ganjoo Insurance Advisor LIC & Star Health. Pranav Pandita enthralled the thick audience with his melodious voice by singing "Halmav Halmav Golab Shankaras Poozi Lagayi".

The program was conducted by Kanwal Peshin and the purpose of the event was to enlighten the youngsters through social media with the divine values of Harratri and Heyrach Truvah.

Dr Karwani who was also felicitated with Shawl and Khoas appreciated the team for organizing such events for preservation and Promotion of Kashmiri pandit community including Art and culture.

Vote of thanks was presented by Roshan from KP Volunteers.

From Page No:1

Amid less snow-fall, CM Omar expresses inability to announce new dates for Khelo India Winter Games 2025

The Chief Minister revealed that the government is in talks with private investors to enhance Gulmarg's ski infrastructure. "Additionally, plans are underway to develop the Gondola further, with new cable car projects in the pipeline,"

he added.

Asked about the budget, Omar refused to comment, saying he would address the issue on March 7.

DIG CKR and DIG CRPF Ops review joint operational preparedness in Ganderbal

officers in this regard. DIG CRPF OPs North Range Srinagar Sudhir Kumar underscored the need of effective synergy and operational awareness to combat terrorists. Following this, a demonstration

of the weapons and new gadgets used by the joint teams, was held. The visit concluded with a strong affirmation and commitment towards coordinated efforts to tackle the adversaries.

First Novel reflects inner life of Author: Karan Singh

founder of Parchment Publications, said, "Publishing 'The Temple of Shiva' is a privilege and a deeply personal honour. Dr Karan Singh's wisdom, depth and storytelling deserve to reach younger generations, inspiring them to explore India's rich spiri-

tual and cultural heritage."

Mehbooba slams Assembly Speaker, Accuses him of imposing a form of 'Martial Law'

Bills, resolutions and other similar matters connected with business of the House.

Several members of J&K

handicapped association detained after their protest march against Govt

for them in government offices and banks.

They tried to take out the march on the main road outside the Press Enclave, but were stopped by police, and several of them were detained, the officials said.

They were later released, the officials added.

Fire breaks out at

Allochibagh Bund, Three-Story house engulfed

that the Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) headquarters in Srinagar received an alert at 12:54 PM, prompting an immediate response. A fire brigade was dispatched within a minute, reaching the scene swiftly.

Firefighters are currently battling the flames, working to prevent further spread.

The cause of the fire remains unknown, and details regarding casualties or property damage are yet to be confirmed.

More updates to follow.

New tax regime: 3 deductions that can help taxpayers maximise savings

Though the new regime offered concessional tax rates, it reduced several popular deductions and exemptions, like HRA, LTA, interest on home loans, Section 80C, and more.

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): The government, with the aim of simply personal taxation, introduced the new tax regime. Out of the total 7.28 crore ITRs filed, 5.27 crore were under the new regime, while 2.01 crore were filed under the old tax regime for AY 2024-25, indicating nearly 72% of taxpayers have shifted to the new system.

Though the new regime offered concessional tax rates, it reduced several popular deductions and exemptions, like the house rent allowance (HRA), leave travel allowance (LTA), interest on home loans, Section 80C, and more.

However, taxpayers can still claim the following three deductions.



STANDARD DEDUCTION

Now taxpayers can claim an enhanced standard deduction benefit under the new tax regime. Budget 2024 has increased the limit of standard deduction from Rs 50,000 to Rs

75,000 for FY2024-25 onwards.

NPS CONTRIBUTION Employers' contributions towards the National Pension Scheme (NPS) have been exempted under the new income tax regime under Section

80CCD(2). However, no such exemption is given to an employee's own contribution to NPS.

GRATUITY

Certain retirement-related benefits such as gratuity and voluntary retirement remain tax-exempt under the

new regime. Gratuity is exempted under Section 10(10), while exemption for voluntary retirement scheme can be claimed under Section 10(10C) by the taxpayers.

Moreover, deductions such as leave encashment under Section 10(10AA) are also available to taxpayers under the new regime.

Meanwhile, as the tax structure evolves, taxpayers must review their tax-saving plans. Although the new regime makes tax-filing easier, it also removes several deductions and exemptions.

However, being informed about the available deductions can help taxpayers maximise savings and minimise tax burden.

EV start-up River eyes exports to 11 countries



BENGALURU, Feb 23 (Agencies): Bengaluru-based electric scooter start-up River, which is backed by marquee investors such as Yamaha Motor and Toyota Ventures, plans to export to about 11 countries soon. "We have an investor- Al Futtaim Group of Middle East Dubai. They are Toyota distributors in Dubai. We have an agreement with them to help us scale to around 11 countries globally because they already have local presence in those countries. We will export out of Bengaluru starting at the end of this year or early next year," Aravind Mani, co-founder and CEO of River, told this newspaper. The company will start with Sri Lanka

or Myanmar and then will scale to Southeast Asia, Europe.

The start-up has an R&D centre in Bengaluru where it employs about 400 people. "We develop the entire vehicle from scratch, starting from designing the vehicle, making the battery technology, the battery management system, the vehicle control units. The cell is imported, but the battery pack is made by us. We don't make cells at scale in India," he said, adding in the next 2 to 3 years, India will start producing it at a large scale.

Founded in 2021 by Aravind Mani and Vipin George, the start-up last year raised \$40 million (Rs 335 crore) in Series B round, led by Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd. River started selling its first product Indie, the SUV of scooters in October 2023. The first River store was opened in Bengaluru in January 2024.

"We will close the year with maybe around 6000-7000 vehicles in FY25. Next year, we are targeting to sell around 30,000 to 40,000 vehicles," the co-founder added. By March 2025, it is planning to open 25 stores and by next March, it plans to expand to 100 stores.

Tesla recalling more than 375,000 vehicles due to power steering issue

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): Tesla is recalling more than 375,000 vehicles due to a power steering issue.

The recall is for certain 2023 Model 3 and Model Y vehicles operating software prior to 2023.38.4, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The printed circuit board for the electronic power steering assist may become overstressed, causing a loss of power steering assist when the vehicle reaches a stop and then accelerates again, the agency said.

The loss of power



could require more effort to control the car by drivers, particularly at low speeds, increasing the risk of a crash.

Tesla isn't aware of any crashes, injuries, or deaths related to the condition.

The electric vehicle maker headed by Elon

Musk has released a free software update to address the issue.

Letters are expected to be sent to vehicle owners on March 25.

Owners may contact Tesla customer service at 1-877-798-3752 or the NHTSA at 1-888-327-4236.

Godrej Enterprises invests ₹200 crore to expand Dahej facility

BHARUCH, Feb 23 (Agencies): The Process Equipment division of Godrej Enterprises Group has announced an additional investment of ₹200 crore to expand its advanced manufacturing facility in Dahej, Gujarat. This follows a previous infusion of ₹300 crore, reaffirming the company's commitment to strengthening domestic manufacturing and supporting India's clean energy transition.

As part of its Phase-III expansion, the Dahej facility's annual manufacturing capacity will increase to approximately 30,000 MT, with expanded production space, a specialized Dust-free Enclosure for exotic materials, dedicated bays for internal manufacturing, and extended manufacturing yards. This development enhances capabilities in producing high-end, critical process equipment for sectors such as hydro-



gen, nuclear, and geothermal energy, along with conventional industries like refineries and petrochemicals.

Hussain Shariyarr, Executive Vice President & Business Head of the Process Equipment Group, highlighted the global shift towards cleaner energy and the increasing demand for specialized process equipment.

He emphasized that this strategic expansion will enhance the company's ability to produce advanced, large-scale equipment for clean energy applications, reinforcing India's role in the global energy transition while delivering world-class manufacturing solutions.

The expanded facility will include an Extended Fabrication Yard for large and complex

process equipment, capable of handling components up to 16 meters in diameter and 140 meters in length. It will also feature a strategically placed 30m x 10m Advanced Heat Treatment Furnace designed to reduce carbon emissions. Committed to sustainability, the facility holds a Zero Waste to Landfill certification and integrates Industry 4.0 technologies, such as IoT-enabled machining and predictive maintenance, with over 80% automation to improve precision, efficiency, and reliability.

A key advantage of the facility is its sea-going jetty, enabling direct loading and transportation of oversized equipment to international markets. Currently, 70% of production is exported to over 40 countries across six continents, with a strong presence in the Americas and the Middle East.

Blood pressure drug could be safer alternative for treating ADHD symptoms: Study

LONDON, Feb 23 (Agencies): A blood pressure medication may be a safer choice for treating symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, according to a study whi. Repurposing amlodipine, a commonly used blood pressure medicine, could help manage (ADHD) symptoms

According to an international study published in *Nuropsychopharmacology*, involving the University of Surrey, researchers tested five potential drugs in rats bred to exhibit ADHD-like symptoms. Among them, only amlodipine, a common blood pressure medication, significantly reduced hyperactivity.

To confirm its effects the team tested amlodipine in zebrafish, an important model for studying brain function sharing about 70% of genes with humans.

The results showed that amlodipine also reduced hyperactivity and impulsivity--core symptoms of ADHD--in these fish. Further analysis of the fish revealed that amlodipine crosses the blood-brain barrier for the first time, meaning it can directly influence brain function.

The researchers then turned to human genetic data and found that, remarkably, ADHD is linked to the same calcium channels in the brain as the targets for amlodipine. This suggests a

potential target brain pathway for treatments.

Finally, an analysis of UK-wide patient data showed that people taking amlodipine reported fewer mood swings and less risk-taking behaviour, further supporting its potential as a new ADHD treatment.

Dr Matthew Parker, co-author of the study from the University of Surrey, said, "Repurposing amlodipine, a well-established blood pressure medication, offers a promising and swift pathway to address ADHD symptoms.

Our research indicates that, due to its existing approval and safety profile, amlodipine could

be rapidly redeployed as a treatment option for ADHD, potentially providing relief to patients sooner than developing new medications."

Current ADHD medications are effective but come with significant side effects: from appetite loss, high blood pressure, headaches and sleep disturbance and carry a risk of misuse. Amlodipine, which is already widely used and well-tolerated, could offer a new, safer treatment option for ADHD.

Around 25% of patients do not respond well to any current ADHD medication, highlighting the urgent need for new treatment options.

Brain perceives unexpected pain more strongly: Study



TSUKUBA, Feb 23 (Agencies): Research-

ers used visual threat manipulation and thermal stimulation in the virtual reality environ-

ment to investigate how the brain perceives pain. They found that the brain perceives pain more strongly when the perceived pain is out of alignment with reality. In particular, pain was amplified when unexpected events occurred.

Pain perception can vary greatly. Sometimes, we feel pain more intensely than expected due to an injury or physical ailment but may feel less intense pain in

other similar instances. This variability indicates that our perception of pain is highly dependent on our expectations and uncertainty.

In this study, the mechanism underlying the perception of pain was investigated.

Two hypotheses have been proposed to explain how the brain perceives pain. One is the Estimate Hypothesis, where the brain estimates the intensity of pain based on predictions.

The other is the Surprise Hypothesis, where the brain perceives pain as the difference

between prediction and reality, otherwise known as the prediction error.

In the experiment, healthy participants received painful thermal stimuli and reported feeling pain intensity while observing painful or non-painful visual stimuli in virtual reality.

The researchers found that the participants strongly perceived pain when the prediction error was large

The study further confirmed that pain was amplified when unexpected events occurred. People with chronic pain often experience vague pain-related fears and anxieties.

Possibly, this uncertain gap between expectation and reality further increases the perceived intensity of pain. Therefore, reducing the gap between pain expectation and reality or "surprise" is important in reducing pain.

This study has resulted in a better understanding of pain perception. It would help to facilitate the development of new treatments that would enhance recovery from chronic pain and trauma.

Lifestyle and Environmental factors affect health and ageing more than genes: Study

LONDON, Feb 23 (Agencies): A new study led by researchers from Oxford Population Health has shown that a variety of environmental factors, including lifestyle choices (such as smoking and physical activity) and living conditions, have a more significant impact on health and premature death than our genes.

The study, which analysed data from nearly half a million UK Biobank participants, examined the influence of 164 environmental factors and genetic risk scores for 22 major diseases on ageing, age-related diseases, and premature death. The findings were published today in *Nature Medicine*.

As per the key findings, the

environmental factors explained 17% of the variation in risk of death, compared to less than 2% explained by genetic predisposition (as per the present).

Of the 25 independent environmental factors identified, smoking, socioeconomic status, physical activity, and living conditions had the most impact on mortality and biological ageing. Smoking was associated with 21 diseases; socioeconomic factors, such as household income, home ownership, and employment status, were associated with 19 diseases; and physical activity was associated with 17 diseases.

The early life exposures, including body weight at 10

years and maternal smoking around birth, were shown to influence ageing and risk of premature death 30-80 years later.

Environmental exposures had a greater effect on diseases of the lung, heart and liver, while genetic risk dominated for dementia and breast cancer.

Professor Cornelia van Duijn, St Cross Professor of Epidemiology at Oxford Population Health and senior author of the paper, said "Our research demonstrates the profound health impact of exposures that can be changed either by individuals or through policies to improve socioeconomic conditions, reduce smoking, or promote

physical activity.

The research shows that whilst many of the individual exposures identified played a small part in premature death, the combined effect of these multiple exposures together over the life course (referred to as the exposome) explained a large proportion of premature mortality variation.

The insights from this study pave the way for integrated strategies to improve the health of ageing populations by identifying key combinations of environmental factors that shape the risk of premature death and many common age-related diseases simultaneously.

“India are favourites because...”: Harbhajan Singh drops prediction ahead of Champions Trophy clash

As the much-anticipated India-Pakistan clash in the ICC Champions Trophy approaches, former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh has expressed strong confidence in India's chances while also backing Virat Kohli to deliver a match-winning performance.

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): As the much-anticipated India-Pakistan clash in the ICC Champions Trophy approaches, former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh has expressed strong confidence in India's chances while also backing Virat Kohli to deliver a match-winning performance.

Speaking ahead of the high-voltage encounter, Harbhajan highlighted Kohli's potential to turn the tide with a big innings, emphasizing that a century from the star batter would make people forget recent struggles.

“Everyone is saying that Virat Kohli did not score runs. I am saying that Virat Kohli does not have a better chance than this. Whatever happened in the last four to five months, everything will be forgotten if tomorrow he scores a century in this match. Then the world remembers. So there is full hope for Virat, and I want to make a prediction that tomorrow is Virat's day. Virat will score runs, and if Virat



scores runs, India always wins,” Harbhajan told agency.

Harbhajan Singh also backed India as the ‘favourites’ for the match, citing their “balanced squad.”

“India are favourites because their batting and bowling both are good, and also they won their last match here [Dubai], and with that experience, they will move forward. Whereas

Pakistan has come to Dubai after losing in Pakistan, and they have played on better pitches, but here they will get a little slow pitch, and adjusting to a slow pitch will be difficult for them. India is the favourite in my point of view, and India will win this match because India's team is the best,” he said.

With the world's eyes on this marquee clash, India will look

to continue their dominance against Pakistan in major ICC events.

Former Pakistan skipper Shoab Malik has picked India as the favourite for the high-octane clash against the defending champions, Pakistan, in the ongoing Champions Trophy in Dubai on Sunday, reported RevSportz. The stakes will rise when India and Pakistan share the same field and fight for bragging rights. Pakistan will fight to keep their campaign alive, while India will look to exude dominance and maintain its impeccable record over its arch-rival.

Ahead of the high-stakes encounter, Shoab picked India as the clear favourite but warned that a moment of individual brilliance from any player could change the outcome. As the countdown to the big game continues, anticipation is at an all-time high, with both teams preparing for what promises to be an intense battle on the field.

NRAI announces team for shooting world cups



NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (Agencies): The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has announced a full team for the two back-to-back ISSF World Cups. The Buenos Aires World Cup to be held between April 1 to 11 will be followed by the Lima competition

from April 13.

Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker will be the headline act of the 35-member team as she is the sole shooter to compete in two individual events, the women's 10m air pistol and the women's 25m pistol. Anish Bhanwala and Vijayveer Sidhu

(men's 25m rapid-fire pistol), Esha Singh (women's 25m pistol), Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar (men's 50m rifle 3 positions), Sift Kaur Samra and Shriyanka Sadangi (women's 50m rifle 3 positions), Arjun Babuta (men's 10m air rifle), Prithviraj Tondaiman (men's trap), Anant Jeet Singh Naruka (men's skeet) and Raiza Dhillon (women's skeet) are the Olympians who have retained their places in the squad.

The team will have a national camp ahead of its departure from March 14

“India's best shooters will once again embark upon conquering the best in the world. We are confident that those selected for the international season openers will come out with flying colours,” National Rifle Association of India secretary general Kunwar Sultan Singh said in a statement.

Babar absent as Mohsin Naqvi delivers ‘beat India at any cost’ pep talk

DUBAI, Feb 23 (Agencies): Pakistan's star batter Babar Azam was conspicuous by his absence from the team's training and there was no clarity on his availability for the Champions Trophy clash against India here on Sunday even as the country's cricket board chief Mohsin Naqvi urged the side to win “at any cost”.

Speculation is rife that he may not be considered for the match after he was not seen at the practice session on Saturday evening. The practice was attended by PCB chief Naqvi and Azam was the only player who chose to take the day off.

Azam copped a lot of criticism for a 94-ball 64 in the 60-run loss to New Zealand in the opening match. He was lambasted for failing to accelerate while the asking rate crept up in the chase of 320 runs in Karachi.

Interim head coach Aqib Javed, who addressed the media after practice, did not give any specific reason for Azam's absence, saying that the former captain chose to rest.

Last night, Naqvi met the Pakistan cricket team at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, and urged them to win Sunday's crucial match against India “at any cost” to silence critics. Pakistan would be knocked out of the tournament if they lose this game.

The team was scheduled to practise for about two hours but the proceedings were halted within an hour as Naqvi

took “stock of things”, met captain Mohammad Rizwan and head coach Aqeel Javed and discussed cricketing matters with them.

Agency has learnt through reliable sources that he urged the captain, coach and players to give it their best shot against India and win the match to “silence their critics, including himself”.

He was seen having a long chat with pacers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf.

Naqvi, who was reportedly unhappy with the selection of the team, made it a point to meet each and every player, coach and support staff.

Later, Naqvi told media-persons that the Pakistani team was ready to face India and do well against them.

“It would be a great game and our team is fully prepared and in my opinion, they are in form. We are with our team, whether they win or lose,” he said.

When asked about Pakistan having to play India here despite being the hosts of Champions Trophy, he said: “You should ask this to Indians if the same would have happened to them, then how they would have felt?”

India had refused to travel to Pakistan citing security concerns and are playing their share of Champions Trophy matches in Dubai. Even the final of the tournament will be held in Dubai if India go the distance.

“350 was always chaseable,” says Smith after Australia's record-breaking win over England in Champions Trophy

LAHORE, Feb 23 (Agencies): Following his side's win over England in their ICC Champions Trophy campaign opener, Australia captain Steve Smith commended the team's effort and said that they felt 350 runs were chaseable.

Australia put aside all talks about a potential early exit from the Champions Trophy, with younger talent showcasing top batting form and Glenn Maxwell and Josh Inglis finishing on a high, taking Aussies to the biggest run chase in an ICC ODI event by a team ever.

Speaking about the performances in the post-match presentation, Smith said, “I thought the guys were outstanding from the outset. (Matthew) Short played beautifully up top. Travis (Head) and I were the only two to miss out and the middle order did a tremendous job. Really pleased. Regardless of what



team we have, we would have bowled first, knowing how wet it (grass) got when we trained the other night and this evening. Looked easiest to bat at the back end. I thought it slowed up in the end in the first innings and I thought 350 was chaseable.”

“For a moment it looked like they (England) were probably gonna get over 400, we were pleased by that effort and knew we could chase this if we batted 50 overs. Trusting each others' skills, the boys did a really good job, took pace off at the right times, hit hard lengths and con-

trolled at the back end of the game. Marnus (Labuschagne) bowled nicely at the back end. The two keepers have been batting beautifully for a while now. They are both in great form. Josh hits the ball all along the ground and has all the shots, Was an amazing effort from Inglis and Alex played beautifully as well. Really pleased with the team effort,” he added.

Australia opted to bowl first and looked set for a fine outing when England was reduced to 43/2, with a move to promote young wicketkeeper-batter Jamie Smith at

number-three not paying off. However, Ben Duckett and Joe Root (68 in 78 balls, with four boundaries) responded with a well-compiled counter-attack, helping England cross 200 runs with a 158-run stand. With wickets falling at the other end, Duckett kept swinging mercilessly his way towards 165 in 143 balls, with 17 fours and three sixes. England scored 351/8 in their 50 overs.

Ben Dwarshuis (3/66) was the pick of the bowlers for Australia, while Adam Zampa (2/64) and Matthew Short (2/41) took two wickets as well.

In the run-chase of 352, Australia lost Travis Head and Steve Smith for single-digits, losing their two most reliable bats at the score of 27/2. A 95-run stand between Labuschagne (47 in 45 balls, with five fours) and Matt Short (63 in 66 balls, nine fours and six) took Australia beyond the 100-

run mark, but Aussies once again stumbled to 136/4 thanks to some brilliance of spin wizard Adil Rashid.

But with an explosive trio of middle-order batters still waiting, giving up was not a choice. ‘Aussie mentality’ did start to set in with every boundary hit, with every six sent into the skies. An aggressive Alex Carey (69 in 63 balls, with eight fours) had a 146-run partnership that put the match within Australia's reach.

Carey was dismissed by Brydon Carse, but Inglis (120* in 86 balls, with eight fours and six sixes) and Maxwell (32* in 15 balls, with four boundaries and two sixes) finished off the match by unleashing some T20-style shots with their trademark audacity, giving no heed to match situation and lack of batting firepower left below them, with 15 balls left and five wickets in hand.

UP Warriorz secure first win in WPL with Chinelle Henry's heroics

BENGALURU, Feb 23 (Agencies): UP Warriorz claimed their first victory in the Women's Premier League (WPL) with a commanding 33-run win over Delhi Capitals (DC) in Bengaluru. The match saw an incredible all-round performance from Chinelle Henry, who turned the tide in favour of the Warriorz with a blistering knock and a key wicket.

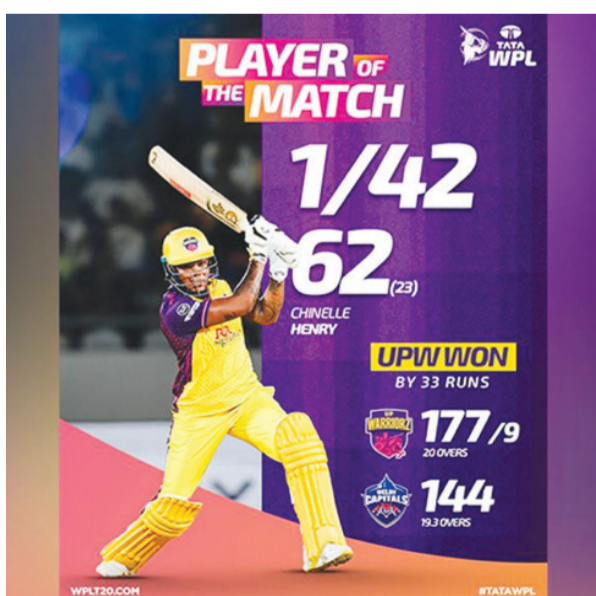
Delhi Capitals won the toss and opted to field first, a decision that initially worked in their favour as UP Warriorz struggled to build momentum. They lost their first wicket at 17, and Kiran Navgire (17) fell soon after, leaving the score at 38/2.

Captain Deepti Sharma (13) and Shweta Sehrawat (11) also failed to make a big impact,

and with Grace Harris (2) and Uma Chetry (3) departing cheaply, Warriorz were reeling at 89/6. Tahlia McGrath contributed a valuable 24 before falling to Jess Jonassen.

Just when it seemed Delhi Capitals had the upper hand, Chinelle Henry produced a game-changing knock. She smashed 62 off just 23 balls, hitting two boundaries and eight sixes, lifting Warriorz to a competitive total of 177/9. Sophie Ecclestone (12) and Saima Thakor (4) also chipped in towards the end.

Jess Jonassen was the standout bowler for the Capitals, claiming 4/31, while Marizanne Kapp and Arundhati Reddy picked up two wickets each. Shikha Pandey also contributed with



one wicket. Delhi Capitals' run chase got off to a rocky start as captain Meg Lanning fell early for just 5. Shafali Verma followed soon after, scoring 24 before being dismissed by Kranti Goud.

Jemimah Rodrigues stood out with a fighting 56 off 35 balls, but wickets continued to tumble around her. The Warriorz' disciplined bowling attack proved too strong for the Capitals, with Niki Prasad (18) and Shikha

Pandey (15*) offering late resistance, but it wasn't enough as they were bowled out for 144.

Kranti Goud, playing only her third WPL game, delivered a sensational spell, taking 4/25, while Grace Harris, who had her first hat-trick of the season, also dominated with the ball as well, finishing with 4/15. Chinelle Henry got the wicket of Marizanne Kapp and Deepti Sharma also chipped in with a wicket each.

her breath-taking knock and contribution with the ball, Chinelle Henry was named Player of the Match, leading UP Warriorz to their first win of the season. With this victory, Warriorz have gained momentum, while Delhi Capitals will look to bounce back in their next fixture.

Have won back my fans, says Hardik Pandya



DUBAI, Feb 23 (Agencies): India all-rounder Hardik Pandya feels he has “won back” his fans following his match-winning contributions during the ICC T20 World Cup title victory in the Caribbean last year.

Pandya was repeatedly booed by the Mumbai Indian fans in the IPL last year after he replaced Rohit Sharma as the side's captain wherever he went after he decided to move from Gujarat Titans to Mumbai Indians ahead of the 2024 edition of the lucrative league.

But Pandya put all the negativity behind him when the Indian team flew to the Americas for the T20 World Cup and dished out match-winning performances.

He ended up scoring 144 runs and taking 11 wickets in the global tournament as India reclaimed the Cup after 2007.

“They (fans) said, life for me, had come a full circle. They said, from here on, there was no looking back. I had won them (fans) back,” said Pandya in a video posted by the BCCI on social media.

With the Champions Trophy in full swing and India set to take on Pakistan later on Sunday, Pandya said the quest to emerge champions once again was very much there in the players.

“A new year, a new tournament and a new challenge awaits us. Our quest to become champions once again has begun.

“Today, we step out yet again to start fresh, to conquer another day, to conquer another opponent. Chapter 2 in the Champions Trophy awaits. Get ready and fasten your seat-belts for a contest that needs no introduction,” he said.

Pandya bowled a miserly four overs in the opening Champions Trophy match against Bangladesh, giving away just 20 runs without taking a wicket as India won by six wickets.

ROF, NDS & VKMI organize cultural program “Sunhere Pal, Bazurgo Ke Sang”

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: The Retired Officers Forum (ROF), a registered social organization, in collaboration with Nami Dogri Sanstha (NDS) and Vichar Kranti Manch International (VKMI), organized a heart-warming cultural program, “Sunhere Pal, Bazurgo Ke Sang.”

The event was held at Home for Aged & Infirm, Ambphalla, Jammu, with the aim of providing an evening of entertainment, enrichment, and awareness for senior citizens.

The program not only celebrated the wisdom and contributions of the elderly but also focused on highlighting their rights and responsibilities in society.

The event took place under the blessings of Chief Guest Vikram Randhawa, MLA Bahu, and was presided over by I.D. Soni, President of Retired Officers Forum, a distinguished educationist and recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award by the UT of J&K.

The Guests of Honour included Vijay Bhagotra, Honorary Secretary of



Old Age Home, and H.S. Manhas, Vice President of Home for Aged & Infirm, K.B. Jandial, IAS (Retd.), attended as the Special Guest, while R.K. Rekhi, Chief Engineer (Retd.), was a Special Invitee.

A key highlight of the event was a special Kavi Sammelaan, where seventeen distinguished poets from NDS and other NGOs presented thought-provoking and inspiring poetry related to the lives, rights, and responsibilities of senior citizens.

The participating poets included Harish Kaila (President), Capt. Lalit Sharma (Convener), Yash Pal Yash (General Secretary), Sushela Bhola (Executive Member), Parvinder Singh Apple, Randhir Singh Rajpuria, Dr.

Chanchal Sharma (Organizing Secretary), Prof. Anupma Sharma (Patron), Ambika Sanmotra, Neha Sharma, Rajni Thapa, Veena Dogra, Chanchal Dogra, Vijay Anand, Manpreet Kour, Swar Kokila Anju Bansal, and K.S. Samyal (President, Senior Citizens Rejuvenation Center).

With an audience of approximately 90 senior citizens, the event was highly appreciated by the attendees.

Adding further value to the program, Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, State Yoga Commissioner and Vice President of Retired Officers Forum, conducted an informative yoga and pranayama session.

He educated the elderly about essential health and

wellness practices, emphasizing immunity-boosting techniques and ways to maintain physical and mental well-being.

He highlighted key factors contributing to overall senior health, including a balanced diet, adequate hydration, regular exercise, vaccinations, and gut health maintenance while advising against alcohol and smoking.

For physical health, he recommended daily exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, eating fresh home-cooked meals rich in protein and fiber, and regular health check-ups to monitor blood pressure, sugar, and cholesterol levels.

For mental well-being, he stressed the importance of social engagement, pursuing hobbies, spiritual and emotional balance through prayers and meditation, and maintaining a positive mindset.

S.C. Rekhi, General Secretary of ROF, emphasized the significance of such initiatives in enhancing the lives of elderly citizens. He highlighted that for the past 24 years, the Forum has been actively conducting

health and social support programs, and he called for the establishment of a dedicated health club for senior citizens to further their well-being.

The event proceedings were skillfully conducted by Dr. Jain, Vice President of the Forum. Among the distinguished personalities present were Prem Gupta (Retd. IGP), J.K. Gandotra, K.S. Samyal, B.R. Gupta, Shashank Chowdhery, H.S. Manhas, Harbhajan Singh, Pankaj Gupta, Ashok Gupta, C.M. Sharma, Abhinandan Jain, Sansar Chand Gupta, and Mrs. Anju Bansal.

The program was a grand success, reaffirming the Retired Officers Forum's commitment to the welfare, empowerment, and engagement of senior citizens in society. As a token of appreciation, Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to all participating poets from Nami Dogri Sanstha by the Chief Guest, who also commended the efforts of the Retired Officers Forum. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Prem Gupta, Vice President of the Forum.

TNWS team hosts Police-Public meeting with SHO Jasrotia

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: Trikota Nagar Welfare Society (TNWS) hosted a police-public meeting today at the society office in the Main Market, Trikota Nagar Colony, Jammu.

The meeting was graced by the presence of Inspector Rajesh Jasrotia, SHO of Trikota Nagar Police Station, who engaged with the residents on crucial community safety concerns.

Rajinder P. Kakkar, President of TNWS, warmly welcomed the distinguished guest and the audience with a presentation of Mad Bhagwat Geeta, Saropa, and the News Magazine of Trikota Nagar Welfare Society. He introduced the society members and provided an overview of the various initiatives undertaken by Team TNWS Jammu during 2023-2024.

Additionally, he read out the concerns and suggestions of Trikota Nagar residents, focusing on preventive measures against thefts, scooty lifting, drug



abuse, and general crime in the colony.

SHO Rajesh Jasrotia attentively listened to the grievances of individual residents and acknowledged key issues. He shared his experiences in Trikota Nagar Colony and emphasized the importance of public cooperation.

To enhance security, he suggested appointing at least one Chowkidar for every hundred houses. He also informed the gathering that 15 cases had been solved, with court proceedings underway.

To strengthen law enforcement in the area, the SHO assured increased flying squad patrols at vulnerable points in lanes and parks during hours recommended by the society members. He also promised full assistance and prompt response whenever residents

report concerns. Furthermore, he committed to sharing the beat constable's contact details on the society's social media groups to improve communication and coordination between the police and the public.

Er. Ashok Kumar Arora, Patron of TNWS, extended a heartfelt vote of thanks to the distinguished guests, the large gathering of residents, and members of the print and electronic media.

The interactive session witnessed active participation from several prominent residents, including Advocate Harshvardhan Gupta, Vijay Gupta, Sandeep Sharma, S.N. Kaul, Krishan Lal Gupta, Dr. T.R. Gupta, O.P. Sharma, Er. Varinder Kumar Suri, Ramneek Dubey, R.K. Kakroo, Kewal Sher, and Amarjeet Singh.

Natrang presents Hindi play ‘Miss World Undeclared’



Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: ‘Miss World Undeclared’, a play in Hindi, written by Satyendra Shrivastava and directed by Neeraj Kant, was staged here today at Natrang's Studio Theatre Kachi Chawni in its Weekly Theatre Series, Sunday Theatre.

The play ‘Miss World Undeclared’ presented at Natrang Studio unfolds the sad saga of all the those people, particularly Asians who reside in the developed European Countries and are subject to racial discrimination and hatred

from the natives as they think their resources are shared and reduced by them. This was shown from the point of view of a school going girl, ‘Noorie’ who was regularly bullied by her classmates who have fair complexion. They tease her for not being as beautiful as them to the extent that she decides to discontinue her education. But her mother, a very wise lady makes her realize that the criteria for being beautiful is not being fair or having external beauty, the real beauty is internal beauty and anyone with good heart and calm mind is

much more beautiful than those people who are just externally good looking. Motivated by her mother, she goes to the school and comes back very happy as on that day the result of Miss World pageant gets declared and the winner was an Indian girl. The play ends with a positive and inspirational note that “it does not matter how we look but it really matters what we are” and that is the key to real and eternal happiness.

Natrang's young artists who presented a remarkable performance included Kananpreet Kaur, Mehak Chib, Priyash Ashok Gupta and Lalita Sharma. Lights of the play were operated by Brijesh Avtar Sharma whereas the music was scored by Kartik Kumar. The show was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen and the presentations were done by Aryan Sharma.

Raise NHM employees' issues in Assembly Session: AJKNHMEA asks MLAs

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: The All J&K National Health Mission (NHM) Employees Association, Jammu Division, has appealed to all Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to raise the issues concerning

NHM employees in a strong voice during the upcoming assembly session, scheduled to commence in the first week of March 2025.

In a statement issued to the media, Dr. Vikas Sharma, the Provincial President of the association, highlighted that since the inception of the

NHM scheme in India and Jammu & Kashmir, NHM employees have been working tirelessly around the clock to provide better healthcare services. Despite over two decades of dedicated service, no formal job policy has been formulated in their favour, he said.

Dr. Sharma further pointed out that many NHM employees, particularly paramedical staff, continue to work on meager salaries, leading to immense challenges in securing a stable livelihood.

In addition, the association has also urged the MLAs to pass a

resolution in favour of NHM employees, considering their decades-long dedicated services in the department.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson of the association, Dr. Hamid Parry, has appealed to higher authorities to release the pending salaries before the

LFO-BHF organizes Free Medical Checkup Camp

Top News Report

JAMMU, Feb 23: Live For Others - Being Helpful Foundation (LFO-BHF), in collaboration with Talla Jewellers and Ujala Cygnus successfully conducted a Free Medical Checkup Camp at Ram Leela Club, Nai Basti, Jammu. Supported by ARR Diagnostics, Centre for Sight, and Nai Basti Ram Leela Club members, including Hitesh Dabgotra and Ashok Gupta, the camp provided free consultations in Orthopaedics, General Medicine, Ophthalmology, and Dentistry, along with free medications, benefiting around 400 patients.



Ravinder Raina also congratulated the organizing team for their dedication and efforts in making the camp a success.


Speaking on the occasion, Vivek Parihar, Director & CEO of LFO-BHF, reaffirmed the organization's commitment to accessible healthcare, stating: “Our goal is to serve those in need and promote a healthier society.”

Abhishek Raina, Secretary and Health Domain Co-Incharge, Jammu Province, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing: “This initiative reflects our dedication to community welfare. We are grateful to all doctors,

volunteers, and partners for making it a success.” The medical team, led by Dr. Devid Sharma (Medical Officer) and Dr. Muskan Sarwar Khan (Medical Officer), played a crucial role in ensuring the camp's success with their expertise and dedication.

The initiative was further strengthened by the participation of dedicated volunteers, including Abhishek Gupta, Stuti, Rubina, Ashu, Kashish, Kangan, Samar, Dhruv, Radhika, Manvi, Babita, and many more.

This impactful initiative reaffirmed LFO-BHF's mission of “Serving Humanity with Compassion”, making quality healthcare accessible to all.



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